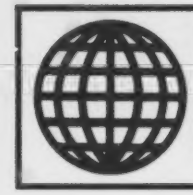

Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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Near East & South Asia

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LD0603142489 [Editorial Report]

Sudan

Political Situation—Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi announced at a 5 March news conference that he will "continue on the course of responsibility" now that he has received assurances from the Armed Forces, and will begin "extensive moves" to form a new government, Khartoum National Unity radio reported. The trade unions also confirmed their "concern for the unity of the internal front" and their commitment to stop strikes. Al-Mahdi stressed the need to expand the National Defense Council to include other members of the military and the "modern forces" in the new government.

A draft action program for the new Sudanese government was signed 4 March by leaders of political parties, trade unions, and associations, MENA reported. Only the Islamic Front "refrained" from signing the program. A national declaration of peace was also signed the same day by the party and union leaders and by State Council Chairman Ahmad al-Mirghani and Prime Minister al-Mahdi, again with the exception of the Islamic Front, the agency added.

Relations with Egypt—Prime Minister al-Mahdi expressed "regret" at remarks made recently by Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and pointed to a need to "evaluate" relations between Sudan and Egypt, Khartoum National Unity radio reported. On the other hand, accusations of interference in Sudan's internal affairs were described as "unfair" by Cairo's AL-AKHBAR newspaper 1 March. The ties binding Egypt and Sudan "are too strong to be rocked by transient winds," the paper declared, adding that Cairo has always been "eager to refrain from any real or suspected interference in Sudan's internal affairs."

Southern Military Situation—SPLA forces captured the strategic town of Nimule 3 March, following a 48-hour deadline to the garrison to capitulate or evacuate, the clandestine SPA radio reported.

Israel

Situation in Territories—The Islamic Resistance Movement-Hamas issued its 37th "call" to the Palestinian people 3 March, the clandestine Al-Quds Palestinian Arab radio reported. The call rejected "negotiations with the enemy" and asked for the continuation of the jihad and strikes and of the intifadah (uprising).

PLO Attacks—Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir claimed that the PLO is "making a laughingstock of its commitment to stop terrorism," according to Tel Aviv's YEDI'OT AHARONOT newspaper 3 March. He added that both the DFLP and the PFLP claim that "'Arafat's commitment does not apply to them," the paper noted. In an interview with BBC television, Shamir "ruled out talks with the PLO, rejected an international peace conference, and denied that 'Arafat has shifted his position," Britain's PRESS ASSOCIATION reported. Shamir added that the PLO are "criminals, liars, and the enemies of our people."

For his part, Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin declared that events on the border with Lebanon prove "again and again" that there is "no truth" in the PLO's assertion that they have ended terrorist activities, Jerusalem radio reported 3 March.

British Minister of State William Waldegrave declared in a lecture to the Israeli Council of Foreign Relations that Britain is "convinced the PLO has changed" and "no longer insists on an independent state," Jerusalem radio noted. On the other hand, senior sources in Jerusalem expressed "cautious satisfaction" at the apparent toughening of U.S. attitudes toward the PLO, according to THE JERUSALEM POST.

PLO Affairs

Yasir 'Abd Rabbuh, a "senior" Palestinian official, has called on the United States to begin a comprehensive dialogue with the PLO instead of "beating about the bush" in a series of informal meetings, Kuwait's AL-ANBA' newspaper reported 4 March. 'Abd Rabbuh said the United States is trying to "throw dust in people's eyes" by "pretending" that a dialogue has been started, the agency added.

Fatah Central Committee member Salah Khalaf asserted that the dialogue with the United States is "shy and weak," Sanaa's Voice of Palestine radio reported. He added that the PLO "gave more than it could" and that it is "not required to present an initiative every day. There is no Palestinian leader who would accept "anything less than the establishment of a Palestinian state," he declared.

Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, told a meeting of newspaper editors in Kuwait 5 March that an independent Palestinian state "shall be estabished within 2 years," KUNA reported.

The PFLP-GC issued a statement 3 March condemning the Palestinian leadership's supply of "imaginary information" to the United States on "alleged terrorist activities by the FFLP-GC" against targets in Western Europe, the clandestine Al-Quds Palestinian Arab radio reported. The statement declared that the "sellout" Palestinian leadership "only knows how to forge things and how to spy on our people."

In another development over the weekend, Ahmad Jibril, leader of the PFLP-GC, issued a statement vowing to "execute Islamic law" against British author Salman Rushdie "wherever we can in defense of the righteous religion and its messenger," the clandestine Al-Quds radio reported.

Lebanon

Hostages Issue—Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, spiritual leader of the pro-Iranian Hizballah group, called for the release of Western hostages held in Lebanon, AFP and the clandestine Voice of the Oppressed radio reported. Fadlallah asserted that although he "understood" the motives of the hostage-takers, "we condemn this practice."

Naval Operations Room Reopens—The Naval Operations Room which monitors ships entering and leaving Lebanon's territorial waters resumed its activities 6 March, Beirut Voice of Lebanon radio reported. The Air Force has been patrolling the coast in the event a vessel attempts to sail to an "illegal" port, the radio added.

Situation in the South—The Lebanese Resistance Battalions-Amal issued a statement reporting that eight Israeli soldiers were killed 5 March by rocket and machinegun fire in the Dayr Siryan area, Beirut radio reported. Another four Israeli soldiers were killed 2 March when an "explosive device" was detonated under their vehicle on the road between 'Alman and al-Shumariyah, the radio added.

Justice Minister Nabih Birri, leader of the Amal Movement, "expressed surprise" at interpretations given to the Army's dispatch to the south, Beirut Voice of National Resistance radio reported. He said the armored vehicles used by the Army belong to Amal and the movement's offices are also at the Army's disposal, but Amal "does not want to assume responsibility for security in south or anywhere else," he declared, adding that this move "lays down the correct base for confronting Israel."

Iran

Rushdie Affair—Britain's "new position" of understanding the offense caused by Salman Rushdie's book "The Satanic Verses" is "not enough to appease Islamic Iran," IRNA reported citing Tehran's JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI newspaper. Britain "must apologize to the Muslim world" for its "deliberate mistake" in permitting the publication of the book, the paper stressed.

Relations With USSR—Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's message to Ayatollah Khomeyni and the visit to Iran by Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze "clearly show" that the new leadership in the USSR "is trying to free itself from the trap of reactionary dogma" and to "open the door of its thoughts to realities and truths," a commentary broadcast by Tehran television 3 March stated. The Soviet Union's "realism" and the strong bases of the relations between the USSR and Iran "make possible future ties which will grow," the commentary added.

Iran-Iraq Negotiations

Iraqi President Saddam Husayn announced 5 March that Iraq will accept a "full and comprehensive" exchange of POW's regardless of the progress of negotiations with Iran, Baghdad radio reported. Husayn added it is possible to reach agreement that POW's "will not be used" in the armies of the two countries.

Afghanistan

The "appointment of a few party comrades in the Cabinet" does not mean that nonparty people are excluded from participating in the government, President Najibullah declared in an interview broadcast by Kabul radio 4 March. He affirmed that the national reconciliation policy is still active despite the state of emergency. He also condemned Pakistan's "expansionist" plans and the "rushed and irresponsible" formation of a "Pakistani-Afghan" government.

Najibullah also urged the United Nations to help relieve the food and gasoline shortages in Kabul by "airlifting" supplies which have accumulated on the Soviet border, according to an AFP report.

Meanwhile, the Council of Ministers ordered measures to improve the quality and supply of bread in Kabul and "extra measures" to overcome attacks by "extremists" on convoys carrying basic goods along the Salang highway, Kabul radio reported 3 March. A large convoy carrying food supplies and gasoline arrived in Kabul 4 March following the reopening of the Salang highway after heavy snowfalls, the radio added.

The mujahidin captured "a huge amount" of military supplies dropped by air and intended for the military garrison at Khowst and exchanged fire with Kabul regime troops on the outskirts of Kabul, according to Islamabad radio reports.

Algeria

Representatives of the National People's Army have resigned from the FLN Central Committee in light of the new Constitution approved in the 23 February referendum, Algiers television reported 4 March. Colonel Yahya Rahal, director of the Army's Political Department, declared in a statement to the press that the Army "should be above political discussions" and therefore "cannot get involved in the complicated game of political trends."

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Ready To Visit Israel With Arab Consent

LD0603120389 Tehran IRNA in English 1152 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Kuwait, March 6, IRNA—Palestine Liberation Organization Chief Yasir 'Arafat says he is ready to visit Israel with prior consent from Arab leaders, according to an interview published Monday [6 March].

He said the PLO was also prepared to halt guerrilla raids against Israeli position in occupied southern Lebanon.

'Arafat told editors of a number of Kuwaiti daily newspapers that he would go to occupied Palestine as the late Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat did in 1977. But 'Arafat, unlike Al-Sadat, said his visit must be approved by Arab governments.

"I can go to Israel only if my trip is endorsed by all Arabs. I am not (Anwar) Al-Sadat to go to Jerusalem for unilateral negotiations," he was quoted as saying.

He said he was prepared to hold talks and negotiate with Zionist officials.

Al-Sadat was assassinated in 1981 by Muslim revolutionaries for treason by signing a peace treaty with Tel Aviv.

On a ceasefire in southern Lebanon, the PLO chief said he would revive the 1981 agreement to halt guerrilla attacks on Israeli border positions in south Lebanon.

He claimed Israel was negotiating with the PLO through the U.N to halt the Palestinian raids which are retaliated by Israeli Armed Forces and their Lebanese allies.

The deal would go through if Israel "stops raids against Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, ends its deportation of Palestinians and stops using arms against the uprising" in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip areas.

'Arafat described the role of the Islamic movement in the Palestinian uprising as "insignificant" and said contacts between the PLO and the movement, known as Hamas, had been severed.

Palestinians would return to their territories within the next two years, he predicted, and the capital of the independent Palestinian state would be Al-Quds (Jerusalem).

'Arafat: State in 2 Years

LD0603095589 Kuwait KUNA in English 0754 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Kuwait, March 6 (KUNA)—PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat said the independent Palestinian state shall be established within two years, with Jerusalem as its capital.

'Arafat, who is currently visiting here, said in a meeting with editors-in-chief of Kuwait newspapers here yesterday an ordinary Arab summit will be held next June either in Saudi Arabia or Morocco and will discuss the question of Palestine and Lebanon and Egypt's return to the Arab League. The Palestinian leader said he [words indistinct].

The PLO chairman said the "Moslem Brothers" movement had nothing to do with the uprising and that those "brothers" in Palestine had rejected to issue a statement of support to the intifadah [uprising] at the very beginning.

It was only through mediation of the Moslem group in Kuwait that the Moslem Brothers in Palestine expressed support for the uprising, 'Arafat added.

The Palestine leader said the region will face a new Yalta agreement and "we have to be there" to avoid being another Armenian people.

'Arafat, who called for full Arab support of the 15-month-old Palestinian intifadah, said his "Achilles heel" was the Arab stand, complaining of lack of Arab financial support to the uprising and absence of pressure on Europe and the U.S.

He expressed belief that the Israeli public wants peace but the PLO's major problem is with the U.S. Administration, noting that it's the U.S. and not Israel that determines the American policy in the region, dismissing as baseless the myth of Zionist lobby in the United States.

Official: 'Israeli Minister' Proposes Meeting

LD0403095189 Kuwait KUNA in English 0841 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Kuwait, March 4 (KUNA)—PLO Executive Committee member Jamal al-Surani disclosed in statements published here today that the PLO had received a message from an Israeli minister, proposing a clandestine meeting with PLO leaders.

Al-Surani, in an interview with daily AL-ANBA', said the PLO however had rejected the proposal and said if such a meeting is to take place it must be made public.

The PLO rejects any sort of agreement wi'h Israel over a truce in southern Lebanon, he stressed.

Israel, he added, represents a forward basis for the U.S. in the region and a Mideast settlement starts with aborting this Israeli task as a U.S. arm in the region.

Al-Surani said it was high time for holding an international conference on the Mideast, though the whole situation presently hinges on a U.S. response to Palestinian rights.

He ruled out the possibility of forming a Palestinian provisional government at present and denied reports about a visit by a PLO delegation to Syria.

Al-Surani, who noted that Arab countries have not met their obligations toward the intifadah [uprising], voiced support to the declaration of the new Arab gatherings: the Arab Cooperation Council and the Arab Maghreb Union.

Al-Surani believed the PLO-U.S. dialogue will assume its natural course during this current month or next month.

Meanwhile, PLO Executive Committee member Yasir 'Abd Rabbuh who headed the Palestinian side to the PLO-U.S. dialogue in Tunis last December told the same newspaper the dialogue has made no progress so far.

He added that the U.S. Administration is playing for time in a bid to find negotiators to replace the PLO.

'Arafat Aide Gave U.S. 'Imaginary Information'

JN0303153389 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1415 GMT 3 Mar 89

["Statement" by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC] issued on 3 March; place not given—read by announcer]

[Text] Statement on the report submitted to the U.S. ambassador in Tunis by 'Arafat's representative on alleged terrorist operations by the PFLP-GC in Europe:

A responsible source in the PFLP-GC has made the following statement:

In line with its pledges and its commitment to the terms of dialogue with the United States, the line of deviation and sellout in the Palestinian arena is continuing to pay the bills of its capitulationist dialogue and is indulging in offering political and security concessions in the service of the U.S.-Zionist project. In this context comes the intelligence report that 'Arafat's representative in Tunis Hakam Bal'awi submitted to the U.S. ambassador on 28 February 1989. This report contained imaginary information on alleged terrorist activities that the PFLP-GC will launch against targets and installations in Western Europe.

We in the PFLP-GC, while aware of the dimensions of this political step, which is intended to strengthen the alliance that is hostile to our national causes and to besiege the revolutionary forces in the Palestinian arena in coordination with the CIA and its ally, the Zionist Mosad, would like to ask: Where was 'Arafat's representative Bal'awi and his intelligence organs when the Zionist enemy liquidated many officials and cadres of the Palestinian revolution and how much did he know of the Zionist Mosad's plans and future plots? It seems that the security organs of the sellout leadership only knows how to forge things and how to spy on our people and their revolutionary groups.

In view of the this blatant coordination between the organs of the deviationists in the Palestinian arena on the one hand and the CIA and the Zionist Mosad on the other, the PFLP-GC would like to emphasize the following points:

1. Since the beginning of the intensive allegations against our front concerning the Pan Am airliner crash and the peddling of suspect rumors on the front's history and activities, it has become clear that all this is a systematic plan to tarnish the image of the Palestinian national position, which is opposed to the projects of the capitulationist settlement as a prelude to directing terrorist strikes against the national leaderships and organizations, particularly the PFLP-GC.

2. The report, which was presented by the sellout leadership to the U.S. Administration, is a hostile and conspiratorial step that entails the launching of a joint security action against our front.

3. Our front's program to escalate armed struggle and support the overwhelming popular uprising in Palestine, and the continuation of the confrontation of the capitulationist projects will not be daunted by the tampering of the hagglers, their allegations, and their plot. Let them wallow in their shame, which is represented by coordinating plots with the enemy intelligence against our people and revolution.

Our people, who are continuing their blessed popular uprising, are capable of defeating their enemies and their agents. With our people's awareness and will, they will foil the liquidationist, capitulationist plot. The plotters' security organs and their U.S. and Zionist intelligence plots will not save them from our people's judgment and punishment.

PFLP-GC Vows To 'Execute' Salman Rushdie

NC0503194289 Paris AFP in English 1931 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Damascus, March 5 (AFP)—A Syrian-based Palestinian group vowed Sunday to hunt down and execute British author Salman Rushdie, whose novel "The Satanic Verses" has been denounced in the Moslem world as blasphemous to Islam.

Ahmad Jibril, head of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC), announced in a statement here that the group had decided to execute Mr. Rushdie "wherever he is found, in order to defend Islam and its prophet."

Mr. Rushdie has gone into hiding in Britain under police protection following an order for his death issued February 14 by Iranian spiritual guide Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni.

The PFLP-GC statement was the first public statement on the Rushdie affair by a Palestinian organization and came as Iran's official IRNA news agency reported that Libyan leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi backed the death threat. While it is based in Syria, the PFLP-GC is also linked to Libya. Syria and Libya have been among Iran's most vocal Arab supporters.

Khalaf Discusses Shamir Remarks, U.S. Dialogue
JN0403190089 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1725 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Interview with Fatah Central Committee member Salah Khalaf, identified by his nom de guerre Abu Iyad, by Radio Monte Carlo News Director Antoine Nawfal on 4 March, place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Nawfal] Abu Iyad, Radio Monte Carlo welcomes you.

[Khalaf] You are welcome.

[Nawfal] I would like to start with the story of the videocassette that was broadcast at the Palestinian-Israeli meeting. What results has it had so far?

[Khalaf] The truth is that the meeting was held among a group of Israeli and international personalities, European and other personalities. The objective of this meeting was to discuss the international conference or the peace issue. They asked for a Palestinian official to address this meeting. Of course, I cannot go to Jerusalem. So, there was the idea of dispatching my address on a videocassette. I recorded an address on this videocassette to the Israeli population in particular.

We have told them that we have a desire for peace based on coexistence between two states, and that all the details you are talking about on the [PLO] charter, about security arrangements, about whether there is one or two stages, and about all these things, all of these we can discuss at an international conference and through direct meetings. The truth is that, as you might have heard, the Israeli public's reaction was very encouraging. The comments and reactions that were made by the Israelis on this issue were also very satisfactory.

[Nawfal] You mean that direct negotiations should precede the international conference?

[Khalaf] No, I meant meetings. There is a difference, for if we say direct negotiations, then they will take place at the expense of the international conference. I have said meetings that precede the international conference. What is happening is that we have been holding these meetings for 10 years. However, we hold these meetings, frankly speaking, on a small level—on the level of peace movements and some of our friends inside [Israel]. We are ready to develop these meetings to include any other responsible side.

[Nawfal] What is meant by discussing the two charters, the Palestinian and Israeli charters. Is it to amend these two charters?

[Khalaf] What is meant is to see that the Israeli charter is not just one charter. There are several Israeli charters that insist that Israel's territory is from the Nile to the Euphrates and sometimes the two banks [of the Jordan River]. They say that the Palestinian charter includes something that calls for the destruction of Israel. Let us discuss the charters to see which of the two calls for aggression. This is what I meant.

[Nawfal] Abu Iyad, Shamir said that he still considers you a terrorist organization, that there will never be dialogue with you, that if 'Arafat tries to come to Israel, as Al-Sadat did, Shamir said, we will put him in prison, [Khalaf laughs] and that if you want a state, and this is also what he said, then you should go to [King] Husayn. He means to Jordan. What is your comment on all this?

[Khalaf] Shamir's statements are not strange to me. However, regrettably, Shamir himself was accused by several European sides of having led the biggest terrorist organization, Stern, during and before 1947. It is not strange for Shamir to say this. Certainly, the Israeli public will not continue to wait too long for Shamir, because there is a difference between calls for peace—a call for ending this long war from which our people and the Israeli people have suffered—and the one who calls for continuing this war, even with twisted methods. I believe that we are with the future, and Shamir is actually with the past, with all the negativism and precipitations.

Statements that 'Arafat or any Palestinian official is a terrorist are being said about all liberation movements in the world. However, those terrorists, whom Shamir is talking about, were the ones who extended a hand for peace, and said that we seek a peace in this region by which two states can coexist. What is Shamir's response to this call? This is the question. However, asking about this person's past, I say that if Shamir examines his past he will realize that his past was true terrorism and not an armed struggle or a liberation movement struggling for independence and freedom.

[Nawfal] Have you lost hope of dialogue with Shamir?

[Khalaf] Let me tell you, regarding politics, events and experience have taught us that nothing is impossible. There are several people who used to say no. Let us look at ourselves. A few years ago we did not say such a thing. We had the belief that there is an Arab force, and therefore, changes would take place. However, we are now calling for peace out of conviction. So, man learns from past lessons and experiences. It seems that although Shamir is an old man, he did not learn from several events. However, a day will come when Shamir learns and says something different from what he is saying now.

[Nawfal] What do you think he means by saying go to Husayn?

[Khalaf] You will have noticed that Sharon is foremost among Israelis that argue that the Palestinians already have a state in Jordan. They seek to drive a wedge between us and King Husayn. We will not accept an alternative homeland. Our homeland is Palestine, and we want our state there. God willing, we and King Husayn will establish a confederal relationship. We are prepared to set up confederal ties with all Arabs. As for the state, it can only be in Palestine. Such arguments as these are designed to alarm King Husayn. But King Husayn has sufficient experience and enough wisdom to grasp the intent of such talk.

[Nawfal] Obviously you have no dialgoue with Shamir. As for the United States, where has that dialogue gone?

[Khalaf] Frankly speaking, we are not happy with the state of dialogue with the Americans, as the Americans are still haunted by fears and hesitation in their relations with us. The dialogue has not gone beyond its first session. Aside from a few meetings between the American ambassador in Tunis and our representative there brother Hakam Bal'awi, the dialogue failed to develop. There's absolutely nothing new there. They say that after Shamir goes to the United States in March, they will start a new mode of action, and then they will develop the dialogue. We are waiting and hope the wait will not be too long.

[Nawfal] The Americans say that they have benefited from some information furnished by you. What kind of information have you given them?

[Khalaf] I found this statement strange. However, whatever the Americans have asked us about and we happened to have answers for, we obliged. If they asked about things in the region and in the arena, we supplied answers, but these fall short of the praise heaped by the official spokesman. Of course, they are showing a good deal of interest in the [words indistinct] with the Americans. They are interested in any talk about terror and terrorists. If we know the answers to the questions they put, we supply them. If they ask questions to which we have no answers, of course we apologize. But their statement was an exaggeration, because I do not think we have supplied them with dramatic information.

[Nawfal] Abu Iyad, brother Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] says the Palestinian struggle will continue against Israel in the wake of [recent] Palestinian operations in the south [of Lebanon] and, in the meantime, he declares in Abu Dhabi that there are indirect contacts with Israel toward agreeing to a truce in the south. How do you reconcile the two things?

[Khalaf] This is our defintion of terror: terror means operations carried out abroad—the operations that affect civilians regardless of their citizenship, including the Israelis. This is our idea of terror. As for action inside the occupied land, we have never interpreted terror as meaning a suspension of military operations. But there are efforts at mediation by certain countries, including certain Arab and non-Arab states, suggesting that there be a truce in southern Lebanon in order to eliminate tension. This question is now being discussed. We would like to ask however: A truce for what purpose? We wish all such action were stopped through a peace agreement in the region.

The sooner the Americans pressure Israel to talk via the international conference, the closer we are brought to a definitive end of the whole story. [words indistinct] I think won't be useful. It will be more to the point for the United States and Western European nations to which we attach high hopes to press for negotiations. Therein lies the solution, rather than addressing certain details.

[Nawfal] Is it likely that there will be a return to the situation that prevailed before the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon?

[Khalaf] As I have told you, the subject is being looked into, and we hope they will produce good results. Incidentally, if this were tied with a solution of the Lebanese problem, we would accept it more readily. Why? We were happy at the recent Arab involvement in the Lebanese crisis, the serious Arab interest, and the absence of Syrian opposition to these moves. A solution with southern Lebanon as part of this package in Lebanon [words indistinct].

[Nawfal] Do you think that the Lebanese question will be resolved?

[Khalaf] This time I am optimistic, because the Arab committee is serious and I learned from more than one Arab source that the Syrians do not object to the work of the Arab committee, and this is good.

[Nawfal] How are Palestinian-Syrian relations these days?

[Khalaf] Unfortunately, the same. They have not made a single step forward. Why? Because the Syrians have not yet made a serious decision to hold dialogue with the Palestinians and the PLO. Once they make a serious decision, we will be ready for any dialogue and understanding, because we all know the importance of these two. We are ready for dialogue in order to break out of arrogance, preconditions, and containment, all of which are rejected. We have grown older, and no longer allow ourselves to be led by an intelligence officer or a foreign ministry.

[Nawfal] And the Palestinian opposition in Syria?

[Khalaf] This opposition is linked to improvement of our relationship with Syria. Whenever our relations with Syria improve, the voice of the opposition dwindles. It is a hireling voice used against us. We hope it will be

understood that there are two types of opposition, one that we respect. Such an opposition comes from within the PLO. It criticizes and is entitled to criticize. It sometimes sees what we do not see. It is something good that there is opposition and democracy. But we oppose the hireling opposition whose voice is filthy and detestable, and we say this is the voice of the past. Such a voice is not really good for the present or future.

[Nawfal] To have an idea about Syrian-Palestinian relations, it suffices to listen to the voice of the Palestinian opposition in Syria.

[Khalaf] That is right, because it gives a picture of what they are told to say. Syria suspended its media campaign some time ago and only stifled voices were heard saying a few words. It seems now that they have resumed media campaigns. For our part, we have not yet started media campaigns.

[Nawfal] Abu 'Ammar said the preparatory meeting for the international conference will be held shortly and will comprise the PLO, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt, and that Syria agrees to that.

[Khalaf] And Lebanon.

[Nawfal] And Lebanon, and that Syria agrees to that.

[Khalaf] That is true. This is what we communicated to Shevardnadze. When Abu 'Ammar and the brothers met him in Cairo, he told us he proposed the idea of this Syrian-Palestinian-Jordanian-Egyptian-Lebanese meeting to the Syrians and that Hafiz al-Asad has personally agreed to that. However, it seems that the talk about Syria's agreement was not accurate, as proven by the fact that so far there has been no mechanism to hold such a meeting. In any case, we support this meeting and consider it a practical step toward confronting the stage of the international conference if it comes and with the mentioned parties.

[Nawfal] If all matters are obstructed—and nobody hopes this will happen—and if no dialogue is held with the United States or Israel, do you not think that Syria will say it was right in the first place and that you made many concessions in vain?

[Khalaf] First of all we presented a new line to our people from our large experience throughout 25 years of struggle as well as through this mighty intifadah [uprising] in the occupied territory. We proposed this solution and we believe in it. If the Israelis get intransigent and the Americans do not continue the dialogue, we will not change the line but the method. This means the intifadah and struggle will be further escalated. We will not change our line because it is in our opinion and after the bitter experiences we had the right line. Let the one who does not believe in this line open his borders for us and for our struggle. If Syria wants to say we made a mistake, let it then open the Golan for us and let all Arab fronts be opened for us so that we can fight. Let this be so if our line is a failure. This is the line which [words indistinct]. And in my opinion there is no other line.

[Nawfal] What do you think about the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC]? Does the PLO view it in a positive manner, and will the ACC embrace the PLO, for example?

[Khalaf] Look, actually, we have one view toward all the Arab groupings that have been formed. Our view is that these groupings are not against us, and they are not aimed against us. Furthermore, we consider ourselves observers in all these groupings, including the latest grouping. But, undoubtedly, if not embraced by the Arab League, these groupings will become, in the future, a threat and will turn into axes that are hostile to each other.

We are interested in relations between these groupings, particularly the latest grouping, because it includes a relatively great number of states from a qualitative point of view. We hope that all of these groupings will be for the benefit of the cause. We intend to submit an application to join all these axes, or let us call them groupings, so that Palestine will be present in all of them. So far, I do not believe there is any danger from them. But, what is important is for them to be contained in the Arab League.

[Nawfal] Then all these groupings must at the end fall into the Arab League?

[Khalaf] True.

[Nawfal] A question on the provisional Palestinian government. What is recent about the plan for this government?

[Khalaf] Look, actually, we have an experience and, probably, this experience has made us think in detail about the government. This experience is based on 1948, when we had a government that we called the All-Palestine Government, which did not survive. Therefore, this time, we are trying to be patient about the subject.

If the proclamation of this government will create an advanced political step, or a step that will help a political act, then we can proclaim it immediately. If there were negotiations coming soon, then we may proclaim it immediately. But, as you see now, the doors are still at the stage of what we may call the stage of waiting, where everybody is waiting. Therefore, the government is still waiting, especially since there is a Palestine National Council resolution that gives the PLO Executive Committee the duties of government—all duties.

Now, for example, the countries that recognized the embassy of Palestine deal with the Executive Committee as a provisional government. But, if the political circumstance pushes us into a new phase and if we begin to feel that this government must be proclaimed, then we will form and proclaim it at the proper time.

[Nawfal] Abu Iyad, we would not have been talking about all these subjects were it not for the major event, the intifadah, which made us reach these subjects. How far has the intifadah gone?

[Khalaf] One thanks God because there were many bets during the first few weeks or months that this intifadah was temporary and not entrenched. But, days have proven, and also the fact that the intifadah is entering now its 16th month, has demonstrated that the intifadah is genuine and not unnatural.

From here, I say to all those who bet that the intifadah will stop because of the Israeli measures that are now being employed—for example, a few days ago, heroic Nabulus stood fast, and is still standing fast under savage siege. Before that, Qalqilyah and more than one Palestinian town in the inside stood fast. They were all betting that the intifadah would stop. I like to say that the intifadah will continue with its current peaceful means and will not stop. I am confident that, God willing, this intifadah—and I say this to all those who bet that it will stop, be suppressed, cool down, or suffer certain setbacks—will continue. Our people's slogan has become: There is no retreat from the intifadah except with the Palestinian state. There is no retreat from the intifadah except with the Palestinian state, God willing.

[Nawfal] Thank you, Abu Iyad.

[Khalaf] Thank you, and God bless you.

Khalaf: U.S. Dialogue 'Weak'

JN0503172189 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Brother Abu Iyad [Salah Khalaf], Fatah Central Committee member, has stressed that the new U.S. Administration has not yet made any positive step on dialogue with the PLO. Brother Abu Iyad described this dialogue as shy and weak. He said that the PLO gave more than it could and that it is not required to present an initiative every day.

In a press statement published in Cairo today, brother Abu Iyad discussed the future of current consultations on peace in the region, the bases of its achievement, and the guarantees for its maintenance and stability. He stressed that there is no individual Palestinian leader who accepts less than the establishment of the Palestinian state. He expressed the view that the position of the terrorist Yitzhaq Shamir is based on rejecting all peace initiatives with a view to aborting the Palestinian moves. However, he stressed, Shamir will neither succeed in his maneuvers nor manage to undermine the revolution in occupied Palestine.

'Abd Rabbuh: U.S. 'Beating About the Bush'

NC0403125789 Paris AFP in Engish 1240 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Kuwait, March 4 (AFP)—A senior Palestinian official has called on the United States to embark on a comprehensive dialogue with the PLO rather than "beating about the bush" in a series of informal meetings.

Yasir 'Abd Rabbuh, quoted by AL-ANBA' newspaper here Saturday, said the Palestine Liberation Organisation had informed Washington that it refused to pursue the informal contacts.

The United States is "beating about the bush by postponing the negotiations and by substituting them with informal meetings," the PLO Executive Committee member said.

"The U.S. Administration is trying to throw dust in people's eyes by pretending that a dialogue has really been started," he charged, calling for a comprehensive dialogue between Palestinian and U.S. delegations.

Washington agreed to embark on a dialogue with the PLO after the organisation's chairman, Yasir 'Arafat, publicly renounced terrorism and recognized Israel's right to exist on December 14.

But there has only been one formal session—which took place in Tunis on December 16 with Mr. 'Abd Rabbuh heading the PLO team—followed by a series of informal meetings during which Washington has urged the PLO to halt anti-Israeli attacks in south Lebanon.

In Washington, the State Department said Friday that the PLO's failure to curb the attacks raised questions about the organisation's ability to abide by its commitment to renounce terrorism.

Mr. 'Arafat said Friday that the PLO was committed to defending Palestinian refugee camps in south Lebanon against Israeli bombardments and raids.

'Abd Rabbuh Criticizes U.S.

JN0503191589 Kuwait AL-ANBA' in Arabic 4 Mar 89 p 31

[By Fathi al-Barqawi]

[Text] Tunis—PLO Executive Committee member Yasir 'Abd Rabbuh has criticized the United States for trying to exclude the PLO and create Palestinian or Arab alternatives. He described Washington's hesitation to set a date for the resumption of the Palestinian-U.S. dialogue as a continuation of the old U.S. policy and an attempt to impose other formulas of Palestinian representation. He said Washington is mistaken if it believes that time is on its or Israel's side.

In an exclusive statement to AL-ANBA', 'Abd Rabbuh said that the Palestinian-U.S. dialogue has achieved no progress since it started on 16 December because the U.S. Administration has used its current transition period between two administrations as an excuse for delay. He pointed out that it was clear to the Palestinian side that these excuses are aimed at procrastination.

'Abd Rabbuh stressed that the U.S. Administration wants to postpone essential and comprehensive talks with the PLO by using the current informal contacts in Tunis to throw dust in people's eyes and pretend that there is a dialogue with the PLO. He added that it is also trying, in cooperation with Israel, to exploit the meetings with Palestinian figures in the occupied territories to hint at the possibility of finding Palestinian sides other than the PLO for a dialogue. He added that this is Washington's real tactic, adding that the U.S. goal is still to exclude the PLO and create Arab or Palestinian alternatives.

He said: This U.S. position has been clear to us and to all the national circles that met with Israeli sides in the occupied territories. These circles have stressed that there is only one address for Israel and Washington—namely the PLO—to discuss ways of reaching a just and comprehensive settlement. The Palestinian official disclosed that the PLO has urged Washington officially and through its embassy in Tunis to embark on a serious and comprehensive dialogue with the PLO to prepare for comprehensive negotiations within the framework of the international conference, adding that the PLO knows that Washington wants to exploit the current contacts in Tunis or in the occupied territories to cover its maneuvers. He said that the PLO will try to suspend these contacts and be content with the official dialogue between the U.S. Administration delegation and the PLO delegation.

Asked about the PLO's assessment of the recent positive statements by U.S. officials, 'Abd Rabbuh said that although U.S. statements in principle and general form hint that Washington wants a serious and comprehensive dialogue with the Palestinians, we should test the seriousness of these general, elastic statements. He said that the road to it is U.S. agreement to start an official dialogue and discuss essential matters, especially arrangements for negotiations within the framework of the international conference. He added that Washington's hesitation is viewed as a continuation of the policy of imposing alternatives to Palestinian representation—alternatives that have been rejected by the Palestinian people and are considered useless by the international community. He said that recognizing the PLO and a Palestinian state and holding negotiations with the PLO, the Palestinian people's sole legitimate representative, are the road to a comprehensive and just solution.

Asked about the possibility of setting a date for the talks, he said: We are ready to start the talks. Washington is mistaken if it believes that time is on its and Israel's side. Time favors the Palestinian position and the Palestinian struggle movement, which is now achieving additional gains and victories on more than one level.

Hurani Discusses Dialogue, Military Operations

JN0403102989 Kuwait AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM in Arabic 2 Mar 89 p 26

[Excerpts] Washington, News Agencies—[Passage omitted] PLO Executive Committee member 'Abdallah Hurani has told REUTER that the PLO wants to see results if the talks with the United States are to continue. Hurani said that the PLO also believes that Washington is indirectly encouraging military operations by factions within the PLO through its hesitation to resume serious dialogue with the PLO. He added that Washington's hesitation in carrying out a serious dialogue with the PLO and in expanding the scope of possibilities for peace encourage this type of operation.

In his interview the day before yesterday, Hurani said that the PLO is not satified with attending unofficial meetings with U.S. officials.

Hurani said at the same time that the U.S. ambassador to Tunisia, Robert Pelletreau, was informing the PLO representative in Tunis, Hakam Bal'awi, about Washington's anxiety over the military operations against Israel. This was the fourth meeting between Pelletreau and Bal'awi since the PLO and the United States held the first session of official talks in Tunis last December.

Hurani, who is an independent and one of the four members of the Palestinian delegation that attended the first session of talks, said that the PLO wants to hold a serious, official dialogue that will thoroughly discuss the Middle East conflict and contribute to preparing for an international peace conference.

Hurani added that the PLO is not ready to pursue meetings of this type if they do not produce results and if they do not soon lead to an official meeting and dialogue. He added that if the U.S. Administration believes these are the limits of the dialogue, it will certainly be mistaken because the PLO does not share this viewpoint.

Hurani defended the fedayeen operations, describing them as a legitimate reply to the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon and the Israeli raids against Palestinian camps in that area.

Hurani said that the U.S. Administration has no right to raise any objections to the PLO as long as it does not condemn the Israeli military repression of the civilian inhabitants in the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Hurani said that the PLO is ready to hold talks on all aspects of the conflict with any Israeli group, including the Israeli Government and the Likud Bloc, which is the major partner of the ruling coalition. However, he added that talks must be held in public and the convocation of

an international conference remains a necessity for the settlement of the outstanding differences between Israel and the PLO and for providing international guarantees for any settlement.

Palestinian Official on Coming 'Armed Struggle'

NC0503203489 Nicosia CYPRUS MAIL in English 5 Mar 89 p 1

[By George Penintaex]

[Excerpt] A high-ranking Palestinian official has revealed that the Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied territories will start an armed struggle in the coming few months against the occupation army.

This was stated in an exclusive interview by Saqr Abu Nizar [Yahya Saqr Habash], secretary-general of the Revolutionary Council of Fatah, and member of the Central Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

He represented the PLO in the celebrations of the 20th anniversary of the Socialist Party EDEK. This was his 19th visit to Cyprus.

He said that Palestinians in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip have already built up a regular army and are ready to fight against the Israeli oppressive army.

"We are going to see in the coming few months a very severe armed struggle in the occupied territories. We are going to fight Israelis everywhere, away from citizens' groupings. We consider every Israeli soldier in the occupied areas as an enemy. We are going to fight the Israeli soldiers and get them out of our legitimate lands," the Fatah official said.

Abu Nizar said the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza have already decided to carry out an armed struggle against the occupation army, parallel to the street demontrations.

He stressed that the United States can play an important role in solving the Palestinian question, but "the Americans do not work hard unless the problem is really hot. So we have to make the problem really hot."

The PLO official said the Palestinians are practising what is their right, as envisaged by United Nations resolutions, which provide for the establishment of a Palestinian independent state in the occupied territories.

Abu Nizar said the armed struggle could not be considered as terrorism because "we have the right to fight the occupation troops as Cyprus has the right and every other country whose lands are occupied by foreign forces."

He made it clear that the Palestinian struggle, which will be carried "by all means," will take place within the boundaries of the Palestinian state as provided by the UN resolutions and not against the state of Israel.

Abu Nizar said the escalated Israeli oppressive measures against the people of Nabulus could only bring the armed struggle nearer. "We have the right to break all kinds of seizure against our people," he added.

He said the Israeli pressure on the people of Nabulus is unprecedented. "The occupation army declared Nabulus a closed military zone, they impose curfews, they bomb houses. There is no food, no water and no electricity," he said.

Abu Nizar said the Israelis try to break the "backbone" of the Palestinian struggle, the intifadah (uprising) but the Palestinians are determined to continue the 15-month struggle.

"The Israelis are trying to destroy the morale of the Palestinian people, because if they manage to do that and break the intifadah who is going then to be the representative of the Palestinians? Nobody will talk about the Palestinian cause."

The Fatah official said that the last stage of the intifadah would be complete disobedience on the part of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. [passage omitted]

U.S. Stand on Operations 'Vehemently Criticized'

JN0403111889 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1100 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] A PLO official spokesman replied today to the statements U.S. State Department Spokesman Charles Redman made yesterday evening in which he voiced concern over the escalation of Palestinian attacks against Israel from southern Lebanon.

The Palestinian spokesman vehemently criticized the U.S. stand, which only focuses on the Palestinian side, which is only exercising its right to self-defense against Israeli attacks.

Operations 'Self-Defense'

JN0403205189 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1820 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Tunis, 4 Mar (WAKH)—A PLO spokesman has asserted that the Palestinian operations carried out in southern Lebanon are acts of self-defense.

The Palestinian spokesman's statements come in response to the statements made by the U.S. State Department spokesman, who said that the United States views with concern the increasing number of Palestinian attacks in southern Lebanon.

In a statement carried by WAFA [PALESTINIAN NEWS AGENCY], the spokesman expressed the PLO's astonishment over the fact that the U.S. spokesman concentrates on the Palestinian side alone while ignoring the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

He described the situation in southern Lebanon as dangerous. He also said that an agreement on southern Lebanon cannot be achieved by pressuring the PLO without any reciprocal commitment from Israel to stop its aggression.

The Palestinian spokesman asserted that the PLO does not seek a temporary truce, but a permanent and comprehensive peace, and that it is serious and committed to that endeavor in spite of the rejectionist and intransigent Israeli stand, which is the main obstacle before all international and regional efforts exerted to achieve peace.

'Arafat Discusses Israel's 'New War Scenario'

JN0303123289 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1150 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 3 Mar (WAKH)—PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat has warned that the Israeli enemy is preparing for a new war in the Middle East in accordance with a scenario that will begin with a small operation in southern Lebanon that does not need a green light from the United States.

In a news conference at the Al-Mushrif Palace this morning, he explained that the Israeli scheme aims to expand this operation "until the sequence of events compels everyone to engage in the coming war." 'Arafat said he has information, which he declined to reveal, on this aggression being prepared by Israel. However, he said he had officially conveyed this information to the Arab League, the Soviet Union, China, Britain, France, and the United States through their ambassadors to Tunisia.

'Arafat explained that, by preparing the new war scenario, the Israeli enemy seeks to "export its suffocating problem" outside. This problem was caused by the valiant Palestinian intifadah [uprising] in the occupied Arab territories, he added. Replying to a question on the possibilities of the enemy launching a large-scale attack against the Palestinian camps in southern Lebanon, 'Arafat said the enemy tries to move out of its current crisis by assassinating Palestinian leaders inside and outside the occupied Arab territories and by preparing for an aggression against southern Lebanon. In this regard, 'Arafat pointed out that the enemy reinforced its forces in southern Lebanon with an armored brigade last week.

'Arafat pointed to enemy Chief of Staff Dan Shomron's recent statements on the possibilities for war in southern Lebanon, claiming this war will be a preemptive strike by Israel against a number of Arab states, including Libya, Iraq, and the Palestinian forces in southern Lebanon.

The PLO chairman said we must realize that this scenario is one of Israel's means to export its suffocating problem caused by the valiant Palestinian intifadah. He reaffirmed the importance of speeding up the convening of an Arab summit conference to outline the features of a joint Arab move in the coming phase in the face of the Israeli enemy. He lauded Arab states that were committed to the extension of material aid to the intifadah and appealed to other states that have not extended aid to assist the sweeping intidafah so the Palestinian people will obtain their rights.

'Arafat explained that the call for convening the Arab five-member committee comprising Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine aims to coordinate the Arab stands on the convening of an international conference. He denied the reports disseminated to the effect that the PLO received a U.S. proposal to hold direct negotiations with Israel. He said the PLO has not received any proposal in this regard, whether from the U.S. Administration or from other parties. However, he pointed to the presence of international attempts to prompt Israel to accept the convening of an international conference for peace in the Middle East.

Regarding his assessment of the prospects of dialogue between the PLO and the United States, 'Arafat expressed his confidence that the outcome of the dialogue will be the recognition of the Palestinian state. Replying to a question on the U.S. attempt to link halting fedayeen operations outside the occupied territories and the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue, 'Arafat explained that there is misunderstanding by the U.S. side on this. The PLO did not announce previously that it will stop defending the Palestinian camps in Lebanon, which are daily subjected to Israeli bombardment and air raids.

He wondered: What is the stand of the official U.S. spokesman on the killing by the Israeli enemy of 22 children in a southern Lebanese school, on its continued air raids, on the continued acts of piracy off the Lebanese coast, and on Israeli piracy in international waters against civilian Palestinian ships? He said: Does the U.S. spokesman want me to ask the camp residents not to defend their children, women, and camps? He expressed astonishment at the enemy's attempts at blackmail through international mediators to prompt the Palestinian forces and the Lebanese organizations to abide by the 1981 cease-fire agreement at a time when this enemy continues its aggressive operations in southern Lebanon. He wondered: Does this not have a price that Israel should pay?

'Arafat denied that there is a change in the Soviet stand toward the Palestine question and the convening of an international conference following Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze's meeting with Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens. He said that the Soviet stand is clear, and it was embodied by rejecting the Israeli blackmail attempts on the restoration of relations between Moscow and Tel Aviv.

Regarding Palestinian-Syrian reconciliation, 'Arafat pointed out that the PLO's call for holding a meeting for the five-member Arab committee of the confrontation states is part of the sincere intention to restore coordination with Syria.

He welcomed visits to Washington and London in case he receives official invitations in this regard in his capacity as PLO Executive Committee chairman. He expressed the hope that relations with the United States will develop and that the U.S. Administration will manage to reopen the PLO office in New York [as received].

Hamas Issues Call No 37 for Further Jihad

JN0303182589 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1204 GMT 3 Mar 89

["Statement No 37 in the 2d year of the intifadah, issued by the Islamic Resistance Movement-Hamas, Palestine" on 3 March—read by announcer]

[Excerpts] On the anniversary of the Prophet's ascension to heaven, the Al-Aqsa Mosque appeals to world Muslims and the Arab and Palestinian people to fight and court martyrdom. Praise be to God, the supporter of the believers and the conqueror of the tyrants. God's peace and blessings be on the guide of mankind, Muhammad, and his followers until the day of judgment.

O sons of the Palestinian people. Your God has honored you by entrenching you in the blessed land, the land of the ascension, and allowed you to resist the enemies of mankind, the bloodsuckers, and the killers of prophets. God has honored you by making you the spearhead, defending the holy shrines until God permits Muslims all over the world, who thirst for jihad, to liberate the land of Palestine and Jerusalem. [passage omitted]

O steadfast people, greetings from the Islamic Resistance Movement to the arms of the stone-throwers. Greetings to Gaza city, which caused the disappearance of two of the Nazi soldiers. Greetings to the Qasbah quarter, which liquidated a criminal Zionist. Greetings to the strong arms in Qalqilyah, which burned the enemy occupation's tax offices. Greetings to the strong arms that burned an enemy fortification in Al-Birah. Greetings to the detainees who adhered to the Muslim youths and the active propagators with the result that prisons have become forums of knowledge that raised the slogan: there is no God but God; and God is great.

Greetings to the patient detainees who rebelled in the face of the authorities in solidarity with the Megiddo prison detainees and in protest against the savage treatment of the detainees and their families and the killing of one of them. Greetings to every hand that threw a stone, a bottle, or a matchstick, and to every hand that wrote a slogan to frighten the enemies. Greetings to all of our resisting, persevering people.

O brave people, we salute your cohesion with the Hamas movement, and we ask you to do the following:

1. The ascension week will be named the International Week of Jerusalem from Friday, 3 March, until Friday, 10 March.

2. Speeches will be made, and seminars held all over the world about the land of the Prophets' ascension and the corruption-spreading Jews.

3. Let the activities throughout the week be devoted to resisting the occupation with hand and tongue.

4. Let the Islamic slogans fill all the walls on our beloved land.

5. In response to the arrogance of the Jews, let the Palestinian Arab and Islamic call on the ascension anniversary be a decisive slogan: No to negotiations with the enemy; no to conceding any inch of Palestinian land; jihad is the path of liberation.

6. Let Monday, 6 March, be a day of fasting and prayers.

7. Let Thursday, 9 March, be a day of comprehensive strike on the beginning of the 4th month of the 2d year of the intifadah [uprising].

8. Let Monday, 13 March 1989, be a day of fasting, after the practice of the prophet, God's peace and blessings be upon him. This is testified by the mother of the believers, 'A'ishah, who said: The Prophet, God's peace and blessings be upon him, fasted in the month of Sha'ban more than in any other month. Let us increase our fasting and prayers in this month.

9. We emphasize points in our previous statements, especially the renunciation of differences and corruption, the prevention of sedition among the people, the revival of schools in mosques and at home, the renunciation of luxury items and the taking of only necessities, the fighting and prevention of dealings with Zionist products, and the spread of compassion among the people because it is a religious duty.

Let the intifadah continue to break the arrogance of the usurpers and their supporters and liberate the blessed land, the land of the ascension. God will not abandon his promise. God is great, God be praised.

[Dated] Friday, 25 Rajab, 1409 of the Hegira, corresponding to 3 March 1989.

[Signed] The Islamic Resistance Movement-Hamas, Palestine.

Algeria

Military Heads Resign From FLN Central Committee

LD0403203389 Algiers Television Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] President Chadli Bendjedid met with Brigadier General Moustafa Cheloufi, secretary general of the Ministry of National Defense; Brig Gen Khalid Nezzar, Army chief of staff; Brig Gen Mohamed Atailia, inspector general of the Army; and Col Yahya Rahal, central director of the Political Department.

After the meeting, Col Yahya Rahal made a statement to the press. He said that the National People's Army, which is loyal to the spirit of November and is the worthy heir of the National Liberation Army, in this phase of political, social, and economic development salutes the will expressed on 23 February by the citizens in approving the new Constitution.

He added that our basic regulations, now more than ever, demand the firm commitment of the National People's Army in its capacity as the achiever of independence and national unity and the defender of national sovereignty according to Article 24 of the Constitution.

Therefore, the National People's Army should be above political discussions, as political discussions are henceforth called upon to develop within the framework of the right to form organizations of a political nature.

Pointing out that the National People's Army should remain a national melting pot in which the traditional values of the people are forged, Col Rahal noted that the National People's Army cannot get involved in the complicated game of political trends. As a force serving the only legitimate authority, it should preserve the unity of its ranks and should show discipline in defending the higher interests of the nation and the free choice of the people.

For all these reasons, and in order to reiterate their complete adoption of the current democratic course, the representatives of the National People's Army in the FLN decided collectively today to ask the president and supreme commander of the Armed Forces to release them from their duties as members of the FLN Central Committee.

The president agreed to this request, which from now on allows the National People's Army to dedicate itself completely to its major duties specified by the Constitution.

Egypt's 'Abd al-Majid Interviewed on Arrival

LD0503133889 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] [Announcer] Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid arrives in Algeria today on a 3-day visit, the first since the resumption of relations between Algiers and Cairo. The Egyptian foreign minister will discuss bilateral cooperation and international and regional issues of mutual interest with his Algerian counterpart, Boualem Bessaieh. Here is Sleymani Mabrouki on the line from Houari Boumediene International Airport.

[Mabrouki] Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid has just arrived. at Houari Boumediene airport at about 1315. He was welcomed by Foreign Minister Boualem Bessaieh. In the VIP lounge at the airport after a short rest Ismat 'Abd al-Majid made the following statement during an interview:

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, welcome to Algeria. Bilateral relations were normalized. What are the prospects for bilateral cooperation?

['Abd al-Majid] God willing, I am going to say I am pleased with the opportunity that was given to me by my brother and friend Algerian Foreign Minister Boualem Bessaieh. I arrived on this visit to meet with him and other Algerian officials.

Naturally, Algeria is a fraternal state that we hold dear and toward which we harbor every affection and amity. I will also have a chance to discuss bilateral relations with officials. These relations, thank God, have a great future [word indistinct]. We will also view Arab and African issues of mutual interest. I am carrying a written message from President Husni Mubarak to President Chadli Benjedid.

[Question indistinct]

['Abd al-Majid] As I already mentioned, we will talk about all the issues and bilateral questions which interest us [words indistinct] which are witnessed in the Arab arena as important developments. We must not forget that here in Algeria the Palestinian movement adopted historic decisions at the PNC meeting. It was the starting point for a basic development in the Palestinian stance which resulted in international support—the (?backing) the PLO and the Palestinian leadership are enjoying now. [end recording]

[Announcer] Mabrouki, it appears that the brother Egyptian foreign minister has concluded his statement and that the line is somewhat bad. Is there any more to add or do you prefer to contact us for our later news bulletin?

[Mabrouki] The brother minister has not finished his statement. We apologize to our listeners for the bad line for reasons beyond our control. We will try and provide you with the complete statement at a later news bulletin.

[Announcer] Goodbye Sleyman Mabrouki.

[Mabrouki] Goodbye.

Bendjedid Meets Visiting Iranian Ayatollah
LD0503075989 Tehran IRNA in English 0750 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Algiers, March 5, IRNA—Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi, member of the Council of Guardians, currently here on a visit, met with President Chadli Bendjedid of Algeria Saturday [4 March] and called for expansion of Tehran-Algiers relations.

Ayatollah Yazdi who arrived Friday raised the imperialist plot in publishing THE SATANIC VERSES, a book blaspheming Islam, and the support given by arrogance.

Ayatollah Yazdi said his impression was that imperialism has waged a deep rooted war against Iran and called for unity of Muslims against this conspiracy.

President Bendjedid also expressed regret over the publication of the book and stressed that insult to Islamic sanctities and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) [praise be upon him] can by no means be tolerated.

He added his country has not remained silent towards the issue and has taken measures and notified ambassadors of European countries.

President Bendjedid calling for promotion of bilateral relations with Iran expressed hopes to visit the Islamic Republic in a near future.

Egypt

Sidqi Undergoes 'Successful' Checkup; To Leave UK
NC0303205789 Cairo MENA in English 2015 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Text] London, March 3 (MENA)—Egyptian Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi underwent a successful laser eye medical checkup today. Dr Sidqi, who is currently here on a private visit, will also have general medical checks by Dr Dhuni Farraj, an Egyptian physician of world renown.

The Egyptian prime minister is expected to leave London tomorrow for Cairo.

Soviet Envoy on Shevardnadze Tour, Peace Process
NC0503184089 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1609 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Cairo, 5 Mar (MENA)—Gennadiy Zhuravlev, Soviet ambassador in Cairo, has affirmed that the Middle East has become a priority for his country in the wake of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze's recent tour of the region.

In a news conference today, the Soviet ambassador disclosed that the settlement of the Middle East problem will be among the topics which Shevardnadze will raise with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker at their meeting in Vienna tomorrow, Monday. They will discuss how the two superpowers can coordinate on this issue.

Zhuravlev said that the Soviet leadership attaches great importance to President Husni Mubarak's planned visit to Moscow. He noted that, during his recent visit to Cairo, Shevardnadze conveyed an invitation to this effect from Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to President Mubarak. He remarked that President Mubarak's visit to the Soviet Union will enhance Egyptian-Soviet relations in all fields.

The Soviet ambassador pointed out that during Shevardnadze's talks with all the parties concerned with the Middle East conflict, except those with Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens, it became clear that there is a similarity of view on the need to convene an international peace conference to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Soviet ambassador said that Shevardnandze had received positive responses regarding the Soviet proposal to set up a center to reduce tension in the Middle East [li iqamat markaz litakhfif al-tawatur fi al-sharq al-awsat], to slow down the arms race in the region, and to establish zones free of nuclear and chemical weapons.

He said that Soviet diplomacy in the region is focusing mainly on the important goal of holding a preparatory meeting for the international peace conference. This, he noted, could be achieved by holding a special session of the UN Security Council, which comprises the five major powers, as well as by appointing a special representative of the UN secretary general, who would act as a mediator to solve the problems between the parties concerned and who would prepare for the international conference and try to bring the views of all the parties concerned closer together.

He noted that these proposals were discussed in detail during Shevardnadze's talks with the officials in the region. He stated that, during his tour, the Soviet foreign minister discussed the question of arranging a meeting between the Arab parties directly involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict—namely, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and the PLO—in order to unify their efforts on the peace process. He noted that the idea of holding such a meeting was born in Damascus and that this proposal was unanimously welcomed by all the parties concerned.

He asserted that the possibility of arranging a meeting between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat in Moscow had also been discussed, because the Soviet Union attaches importance to the unification of Arab stands. Therefore, he added, the Soviet Union does not exclude any ideas that might lead to the settlement of the problem.

The Soviet ambassador pointed out that Shevardnadze's tour of the region had demonstrated that the viewpoints of the Soviet Union and of the countries he visited are

identical. As for Egypt, he said, Shevardnandze's visit had been a sign of the full normalization of economic and industrial relations between the two countries. He emphasized that the coming stage will witness tangible developments in bilateral relations through the Joint Committee for Economic and Trade Cooperation. The setting up of this committee, he added, was agreed upon during the visit to Moscow in May by Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, Egyptian deputy prime minister and foreign minister.

The Soviet ambassador referred to the agreements concluded between Egypt and the Soviet Union during the visits to Egypt of the Soviet electricity and ferrous metallurgy ministers. During these visits, he said, specific agreements had been reached on the renovation and modernization of the Soviet-built factories in Egypt. There had also been agreement on new energy projects, such as the establishment of a power plant in the 'Uyun Musa area, with an output equal to half of the electricity being generated by the High Dam installation, he stated.

Commenting on Soviet-Syrian relations, the Soviet ambassador said that the ties between Moscow and Damascus have traditionally been friendly.

On Shevardnadze's visit to Iraq, he stated that a committee of experts has been set up in order to discuss security arrangements in the Gulf. An agreement had been reached on carrying out studies to promote cooperation between Iraq and the Soviet Union, he added. Regarding Shevardnadze's talks with PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat in Cairo, Zhuravlev said that, during these talks, it was agreed to form a joint Soviet-Palestinian committee in order to discuss the Middle East peace process.

Referring to the Soviet foreign minister's talks with Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens, Zhuravlev stated that there had been no change in the Israeli position on the international peace conference and noted Israel's continued rejection of such a conference. He asserted his country's insistence that relations between Moscow and Tel Aviv could not be resumed until the process for an international conference for peace in the Middle East has begun.

Islamic Leader Interviewed on 'Ulema Statement

JN2502161689 Kuwait AL-WATAN in Arabic 23 Feb 89 p 12

[By Hisham Tantawi in Cairo]

[Text] In all the events of violence and fanaticism in recent years, the name of Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd al-Rahman is high on the list of those accused of carrying out these acts in his capacity as the general leader [amir] of the Islamic groups in Egypt.

In all conferences and seminars held by the Islamic groups all over Egypt, Shaykh 'Umar is the lecturer and the speaker. Each seminar or lecture is usually followed by a demonstration or march that ends with clashes with security forces.

Who is Shaykh 'Umar? How does he think? Why does he accuse the society, the ruler and the ruled, of infidelity? In his house on Al-Warshah Street in Al-Fayyum, Al-WATAN met with him and conducted the following interview.

[Tantawi] What do you feel about the statements of Shaykh Muhammad Mutawali al-Sha'rawi and the Al-Azhar rector?

['Abd al-Rahman] The statement of the Al-Azhar rector was biased toward the government and based on what was published in government newspapers about events in 'Ayn Shams. What was published appeared on Saturday and the statement was made on Sunday. The statement was prepared in advance following reports that had reached the Al-Azhar rector from the security organs, particularly the state security intelligence.

This does not surprise us, for the Al-Azhar rector abstained from testifying in the case called "The Redeemed From Hell." He was also involved in the preparation of the personal law, which some 'ulema felt is tantamount to infidelity. If the Al-Azhar rector went to 'Ayn Shams, he would have seen all good Muslim youths praying, treating patients, and supporting those who were subjected to injustice.

[Tantawi] How can you say all is well? An officer named 'Isam Shams was slaughtered by a youth from the Islamic groups. How do you explain this, or how do you view it?

['Abd al-Rahman] The security men started the violence. Before this, there was no violence, and the 'Ayn Shams events were created by the state security intelligence.

[Tantawi] I said there was an officer killed in 'Ayn Shams.

['Abd al-Rahman] I do not know all the details on this.

[Tantawi] Why, considering the Islamic group is accused of murdering him?

['Abd al-Rahman] We have not authorized this, and none of the Islamic groups' members did this.

[Tantawi] Do you condemn the murder of officer 'Isam Shams?

['Abd al-Rahman] In this case, yes, I do condemn the murder of the officer. However, at the same time, I condemn the murder of scores of Muslim youths and the arrest of youths from the Islamic groups.

[Tantawi] What about the 'ulema statement which was read by His Eminence Shaykh Sha'rawi?

['Abd al-Rahman] The 'ulema call themselves an independent committee. It is only a committee that issued its statement at a specific time. If it were an independent committee, it would not have issued such a statement at that time.

[Tantawi] What do you mean by a non-independent committee?

['Abd al-Rahman] I mean a committee that is affiliated with the awqaf minister.

[Tantawi] Shaykh Al-Sha'rawi is not affiliated with the awqaf minister.

['Abd al-Rahman] Regardless, the awqaf minister was the one who made such a call. The independent committee is a committee that meets and sits together to discuss Egypt's affairs and problems and to express religious opinions on them. However, the awqaf minister has called on this committee to meet. He claimed that he does not have guidance over this committee, that the government has no control over it, and that it will meet in Al-Azhar. However, this committee issued what was dictated to it by the awqaf minister. Thus, it has become a committee that is controlled by the authorities. It denies that it belongs to the authorities, as if affiliation with the authorities were a shame. At the same time, it speaks in favor of the authorities.

[Tantawi] What do you have to say to those who call for patience regarding the implementation of the Islamic law until the time is ripe?

['Abd al-Rahman] Those who call for this are trying to give justifications to the ruler. It is as if they are telling him that if someone asks him to implement the Islamic law, he should tell him to be patient until the circumstances are appropriate. This is a very weak pretext used by any ruler who evades the implementation of Islamic law.

[Tantawi] Do you hold society to be unfaithful?

['Abd al-Rahman] We do not hold society to be unfaithful. However, we believe that there is deviation from what is right. We cannot say a word other than what is included in the Koran. Almighty God says: If any fail to judge by the light of what God has revealed, they are no better than unbelievers. [Koranic verses]

[Tantawi] The Koran also says: O ye who believe! Obey God, and obey the Apostle and those charged with authority among you. [Koranic verses]

['Abd al-Rahman] Obedience is for God and the apostle and then for those charged with authority. However, if they do not obey God, we must not obey them.

[Tantawi] You instigate the youth to leave government jobs and reject government wages, because, as you believe, it is usury. Does this mean that Islam forbids working for a government that fails to rule according to God's law?

['Abd al-Rahman] This is one of the government's allegations. Therefore, we say that working for the government and government wages are lawful and not forbidden. Work is legal because God allows it regardless of whether the government rules according to God's law.

[Tantawi] Where is the Muslim Brotherhood now on the map of Islamic activity?

['Abd al-Rahman] The Muslim Brotherhood appeases the government and is trying to become a party. This conflicts with what their imam, Hasan al-Banna, said to the effect that the Muslim Brotherhood is not a party or a committee but a group. The Muslim Brotherhood's flattery to the government has made it lose a great deal of its popularity and prestige.

[Tantawi] Shaykh 'Umar, you are accused of being a terrorist and extremist and of supporting terrorists.

['Abd al-Rahman] Yes, I am a terrorist and extremist in the cause of God and His prophet's tradition.

Libya

Reportage on General People's Congress Meetings

Foreign Guests Deliver Speeches

LD0303192889 Tripoli JANA in English 1758 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Excerpts] Al-Bayan al-Awal, 3 Al-Mirikh [March] JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The General People's Congress resumed its meeting yesterday afternoon in its 15th regular session to formulate the resolutions of the basic people's congresses in their 2nd regular session for the year 1988.

The secretary general of the General People's Congress opened the afternoon session welcoming in his speech the brotherly and fraternal delegations attending this session and participating with the Libyan Arab people in commemorating the 12th anniversary of the establishment of people's power and the birth of the first Jamahiriyah in history. Then the secretary general called for the visiting delegations to deliver their fraternal speeches. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, the head of the delegation of Chad, in his speech, has commended the brotherly ties among brothers in great Al-Jamahiriyah and Chad, stressing the importance of promoting and strengthening the brotherly relations between the two countries for the common

good and for the African questions. He says that we must work together in the battle of defiance and fight ignorance and diseases to achieve development and progress for all African peoples.

Meanwhile, the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization, in his speech, has lauded the tremendous efforts made by the leader of revolution for strength [words indistinct] and supporting the onraging people's revolution led by the generation of anger through its people's committees in occupied Palestine against the Zionist enemy, adding that making an important item on the agenda of the General People's Congress expresses the feelings of the people of great Al-Jamahiriyah regarding the pan-Arab responsibility and stresses the pan-Arab line taken by the great Al-Fatih revolution towards the central question of the Arab nation, namely, Palestine.

He adds that this is not something new to this Arab people. The Palestinian question has always been in the mind and heart of the leader of revolution. His support and assistance to the people's revolution has been continuous and has never stopped.

Concluding his speech, the PLO representative has reconfirmed the continuation of the armed struggle for liberating Palestine adding that the Palestinian Arab people is ready to continue the steadfastness. It will continue struggling and giving sacrifices until the liberation of the whole of Palestine.

The head of the Syrian delegation started his address by conveying the greetings of the Syrian People's Council, the Arab people of Syria, and President Hafiz al-Asad, to the leader of the great Al-Fatih revolution and the masses of the Arab people in great Jamahiriyah.

He said: "It is a great honour for us to take part in the sessions of the General People's Congress and to join with the Libyan Arab people in celebrating its anniversaries and victories on the 12th anniversary of the freedom declaration establishing people's authority and the birth of the first Jamahiriyah in history."

He pledged the standing by and support of the Arab people of Syria to its Libyan Arab brother in its heroic confrontation with all imperialist plots. He renewed Syria's condemnation of U.S. imperialist threats and its attempts to launch an aggression against the Al-Rabitah medicine plant.

The head of the Syrian delegation ended his speech by saluting the raging popular revolution, being led by the generation of anger through its people's committees, amongst the savage Zionists calling for support of the right of the Palestine Arab people to establish its own independent state. [passage omitted]

JANA on 4 Mar Proceedings

LD0403152589 Tripoli JANA in English 1442 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Al-Bayan al-'Awal, March 4, JAMAHIRYAH NEWS AGENCY—The leader of the revolution attended this afternoon part of the proceedings of the morning session of the General People's Congress within the context of the 15th ordinary session of the congress taking place at the moment at the Arab Medical University at the city of Al-Bayan al-'Awal, Benghazi, to draft the decisions of the basic people's congresses taken during their second session for 1988.

Aslo attending the session was Staff Major 'Abd al-Salam Ahmad Jallud.

The leader made a number of remarks on the working course of the General People's Congress and the way the decisions of the basic people's congresses are carried out.

The drafting committees continued their proceedings this morning by listening to the decisions of the People's Congress regarding the contents of the speech made by the leader of the revolution on the 19th anniversary of the great Al-Fatih revolution and it was asserted that the speech of the leader would be laid down as a working policy or the people's committees to implement them, taking into consideration the remarks made by the People's Congress.

Also the basic people's congresses in the municipalities of great Jamahiriyah expressed satisfaction towards the follow up of the execution of the basic people's congresses drafted by the General People's Congress during its 14th ordinary session with the assertion to execute those which were not yet implemented especially regarding the agrarian, industrial and production projects.

Also the second committee continued the drafting of the basic people's congresses on draft laws as the remarks of the basic people's congresses on the draft of social security, the draft law on the rights of Arab nationals living in great Jamahiryah, the law on exemption of Arab goods from tariffs, and the law on the protection of camels, olive trees and palm trees were reviewed.

The third committee reviewed the decisions of the basic people's congresses in relation to the report of the General People's Committee for the economy, external trade, and its companies.

The basic people's congresses expressed satisfaction over the contents of the report asserting some remarks including the provision of the strategic stocks from food supplies in the providing of necessary consumer goods with great care for quality, taste, prices and price controls, combatting middle man and the determination of

the role of partnerships, craftsmanship congresses, popular organisations and individuals in the matter of imports, encouraging local agricultural and industrial products.

Also the sixth committee reviewed the decisions of the masses of the basic people's congresses regarding the general people's committee for communications and maritime transport and its companies and the masses of the basic people's congresses expressed satisfaction with the report with the assertion of a number of remarks including the work to overcome the difficulties facing the companies of the general people's committee for communications and maritime transport, modernizing their adminstration, giving importance to training and supporting the air and maritime fleets and improving air and land services and attaching importance to developing ports and their services.

AL-Qadhdhafi Makes Remarks

LD0403235189 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic 2115 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] The brother leader of the revolution today attended part of the morning session of the General People's Congress which is holding its 15 session, at the Arabs' medical faculty, in Al-Bayan al-'Awal, Banghazi, to formulate the decisions of the basic people's congresses made at their second session for 1988. The meeting was also attended by Staff Major 'Abd al-Salam Ahmad Jallud.

The brother leader made remarks on the progress of the work of the General People's Congress and the way decisions are formulated by the masses of the basic people's congresses.

In his remarks, the leader reaffirmed the importance of and the need for the decisions of the masses to incorporate the goals of the revolutionary program. These goals include production and self-reliance in order to make alternative resources to oil available and to build the projects included in the revolutionary plan for advanced development. He explained that this would help assert the authority of the people, strengthen the freedom of the masses, and permit the people's Jamairiyah to reach the stage of terrestrial paradise.

The brother leader underlined the need for the basic people's congresses to be fully aware of their sources of income—including facts and figures—especially their income from oil, which constitutes the main natural wealth of the great Jamahiriyah. Then the masses may make decisions themselves—freely, clearly, and responsibly.

The leader said that the realization of the revolutionary program will enable the masses—through self-reliance on their own capabilities—to face up to the challenges of backwardness and to realize an economic, military, and scientific defense capability with which they can confront the enemies of the Jamahiriyah and the enemies of the Arab nation.

JANA on 5 Mar Meetings

LD0503160589 Tripoli JANA in English 1439 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Al-Bayan al-Awal, Al-Marrikh [March] 5, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The General People's Congress resumed its proceedings this morning within the framework of its 15th ordinary session at the Arab medical university in Banghazi to draft the decisions and recommendations of the basic people's congresses taken during their second ordinary session for 1988.

The first committee debated and looked into the execution of the balance of imports for the year 1988 and the preparation of the budget of imports for 1989.

The majority of the basic people's congresses expressed satisfaction over the balance of imports for 1989 taking into consideration the remarks coming from the basic people's congresses, amongst them the increase in the allowances for basic goods, spare parts, [word indistinct] material and to give priority to medical imports and agricultural and industrial requirements applying the principle of barter in imports, especially with sisterly countries.

Then the first committee turned to debating the decisions of the basic people's congresses on defence budget and financial subsidies for 1989. The congresses endorsed the budget with some remarks including the welfare of the martyrs' families and the missing and the increase in the salaries of the members of the armed people and the assertion that the expenditure must be directed towards positive revenue and give priority to scientific research centres in the field of war industry.

Also, the third committee reviewed the decisions of the basic people's congresses regarding the general corporation for electricity and its subsidiaries. The masses of the basic people's congresses expressed satisfaction at the report with some remarks including an increase in electricity prices and forcing the public companies to pay their outstanding bills to the electricity corporation and the need for the company to collect payments regularly and to look after the maintenance of the high voltage cables and stations, providing spare parts, training Libyan Arab elements and paying compensation to the citizens for any losses caused by power cuts, etc.

Al-Qadhdhafi Attends Session

LD0503161489 Tripoli JANA in English 1442 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Al-Bayan al-Awal, Al-Marrikh [March] 5, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The leader of the revolution today attended part of the proceedings of the morning session of the General People's Congress,

within the framework of its 15th ordinary session, being held at the Arab medical university in the city of Al-Bayan al-Awal, Banghazi to draft the decisions of basic people's congresses taken during their second ordinary session for 1988.

Also Staff Major 'Abd al-Salam Ahmed Jallud attended this session.

The leader made a number of remarks regarding the working process of the General People's Congress within the context of the consolidation of people's power and authority whereby the masses complete their total control over their resources.

In this respect, the leader emphasized the need for all companies and institutions to be under people's control and accountability in consolidation of people's democracy enabling the masses to evaluate the course and effectiveness of work and production, the extent of the application of people's power and safeguarding the rights of the producers inside these institutions and companies being a result of the basic people's congresses and set up for the implementation of these decisions.

The leader stressed the importance of expanding the scope of setting up companies owned by the masses encouraging and promoting them and advertising the method of their production.

He made clear that the establishment of around 200 public companies for the Libyan Arab people is a massive revolutionary and socialist achievement, for these companies before the revolution were under the control of a minority who benefited from the revenues to the exclusion of others and enslaved through wages the people working for them...he made clear that public companies owned by the masses is a sound socialist system, for it is free from exploitation, realised freedom for the producers and works for the realisation of social useful ends contrary to the exploiting capitalist companies working for profit at the expense of the workers and the masses in general.

The leader pointed out that the realisation of democracy at the places of production will complement people's democracy at the level of great Jamahiriyah where the people's committees elevated inside these companies and productive institutions will be responsible before the basic people's congresses and that itself constitutes a complementary element to the power of the free sovereign people.

Sudan

Further on 'Deep Political Crisis' in Khartoum

State Council Actions Noted

NC0303170289 Paris AFP in English 1649 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Excerpts] Khartoum, March 3 (AFP)—A deep political crisis in Sudan over how the country should be run and over the civil war in the south is expected to come to a head this weekend with the resignation of Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi, to be followed by formation of a new government. Mr. al-Mahdi is expected to announce his resignation Sunday. [passage omitted]

The State Council or collegiate presidency has, according to the daily newspaper AL-AYYAM, taken the initiative to try to resolve the crisis in meetings with the Army commander and chief-of-staff, the prime minister and all the political parties.

Its deputy head, Idris al-Banna of the Ummah Party, was quoted Friday by the paper as saying the central idea was that Mr. al-Mahdi submit his resignation Sunday and that a new government be formed Monday. The proposals had met with a positive response from the military chiefs and Mr. al-Mahdi, he said.

In a prepared statement on its supervision of the process, according to the paper, the State Council said that the new government will be made up of all political forces inside and outside the government, and would also include trade unions.

AL-AYYAM reported that the text had been endorsed by the Army General Command late Thursday and was to have been published by the official news agency SUNA, but that it was then withdrawn for further review and additions. It was not immediately clear what had delayed publication of the statement.

Discussions on how broad the new administration should be were expected to continue Saturday, informed sources said.

It is also not clear if any place is envisaged for the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, political wing of the Sudan People's Liberation Army, which has been waging a war against the successive regimes in Khartoum since 1983 on a democratic, secular programme opposed to Arab-Moslem domination. [passage omitted]

Coup Possibility 'Mounting'

NC0403071889 Cairo MENA in English 0659 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Cairo, March 4 (MENA)—The three Cairo Arabic morning dailies reported prominently on their front-pages today the political scene in the Sudanese capital which appeared to be heading for a major eruption with the Army, after the latter's rejection of a request by Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi that he be given more time to form a new coalition government.

Army troops erected sandbag defences outside military bases and set up road checks as rumours of an impending coup by junior officers swept the capital, the papers said.

Al-Mahdi and the military have been locked in confrontations for a couple of weeks over political reforms and the handling of the situation in the southern part of the

country. Fed up with bickering among as many as 32 political parties and frustrated by the lack of arms to fight against southern rebels, the Sudanese Armed Forces generals put their troops on nation-wide alert on Tuesday, after Al-Mahdi failed to meet their demands for reform.

Sudanese informed sources said it has become likely that a new broad-based government including all parties and unions will be announced shortly, the papers said.

The council concentrates today on drawing a timetable for implementing a 7-point reform program stressing the adoption of a balanced foreign policy, dissolution of partisan militias, and the preparation for general elections according to a new law which guarantees representation of all political forces.

Western and Arab diplomats in Khartoum said the possibility of a coup d'etat is mounting up unless an immediate breakthrough is achieved particularly as the Army commanders refused a proposal of taking part in a national salvation government while leader of the Islamic Front Hasan al-Turabi rejected the participation of the trade unions in the proposed government.

At the same time Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi threatened to halt aid offered by Libya to the Sudan if the Army seized power. Al-Mahdi will declare his choice at a press conference tomorrow, the papers added.

Meetings Continue on Government

NC0403123989 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1121 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Khartoum, 4 Mar (MENA)—Ruling and opposition political parties, union federations, and the Armed Forces in Sudan have unanimously called for the formation of a government of national salvation, consisting of the political parties, trade union federations, and the regular Armed Forces, that would implement a program of reform to extricate the country from its current crisis.

Intensive meetings of the political, legislative, and executive authorities and of political parties and trade unions are continuing to take place with the crisis.

This morning the Constituent Assembly, "the parliament," began an extraordinary meeting under Assembly Chairman Muhammad Yusuf Muhammad to discuss the prime minister's statement and ways of emerging from the country's current crisis. It should be recalled that the Constituent Assembly will hold regular sessions on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

The AL-Ummah Party's Political Bureau held an extraordinary meeting which lasted until midnight last night under the chairmanship of the party leader, Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi. During the meeting the bureau reviewed the consultations and contacts which had taken place among the State Council, the political parties, the Armed Forces, and Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi over the issue of forming a government of national salvation from among the members of the Constituent Assembly and outside figures.

Informed sources have pointed out that a majority of the Al-Ummah Party's Political Bureau stressed that it is necessary for the party to agree to the dissolution of the present government and the formation of a government of national accord comprising all political parties and unions from within and outside the Constituent Assembly.

The Al-Ummah Party's Political Bureau and its parliamentary group will continue their meetings this evening to reach agreement regarding the Al-Ummah Party's final view on the makeup of the new government and the reform program.

The same sources reported that the Constituent Assembly's joint committee comprising representatives of the Al-Ummah and the Democratic Unionist Parties, which was formed on Tuesday, has reached an agreement in principle to dissolve the present government and form a government of national salvation from within and outside the Consituent Assembly. Such a government would adhere to a specific program for ending hostilities in southern Sudan and convening a constitutional conference for peace, in accordance with the recent Sudanese peace initiative. The committee will resume its meetings this evening in order to reach agreement on the future government's program to which it will be committed.

Thirty-eight political parties, trade unions, and labor federations which met at the lawyers union headquarters last night asserted the need to form a government of national salvation comprising the political parties, trade union federations, and the Armed Forces.

It is expected that the State Council will announce an important statement during the next 24 hours in which it will declare agreement over the makeup of the future government and the reform program for the coming stage.

All the political paraties will sign a national declaration of peace this evening to achieve peace in the south, which is a basic demand of all the political and popular forces in the country.

According to confirmed reports, senior Armed Forces officers are continuing their meetings. This evening they will hold a meeting under the chairmanship of General Fathi Ahmad, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, to evaluate the situation and assess its various implications. Meanwhile, a state of preparedness continues to prevail in the ranks of the Armed Forces.

Al-Mahdi Urged To Resign

NC0403165589 Cairo MENA in English 1501 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Khartoum, March 4—MENA—Leader of the African opposition in the Constituent Assembly, Liaba James Sorrour, [name as received] was quoted here today as saying that the resignation of Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi is the only means for taking the Sudan out of its current crisis.

In statements to the press published today, the opposition leader called for the formation of a national salvage coalition comprising all parties and headed by a neutral person.

Meanwhile, some Sudanese newspapers underlined in their editorials today the necessity of having another prime minister. AL-ADWA' newspaper said in its editorial that the political street and many working forces of the Sudanese community are now convinced that the reason of the crisis is Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi who completely failed throughout the past years despite his swinging among the various trends of the moderates, rightists and leftists. The paper said that he exceeded all limits of failure which reflected on the life of the people, their security and stability.

Draft Government Program Signed

NC0403223389 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2205 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Khartoum, 4 Mar (MENA)—Some 60 leaders of Sudanese political parties, trade unions, and associations this evening signed the draft program of the new government which is expected to be formed on Monday. Only the Islamic Front refrained from signing the program, which stresses certain fundamental points, such as the upholding of constitutional legality, a democratic multiparty system, the independence of the judiciary, the supremacy of the rule of the law, the safeguarding of public liberties, and human rights.

The program also calls for adopting a defense and security policy based on strengthening and rehabilitating the Armed Forces in times of war and peace, disbanding the existing militias, and supporting the regular forces to maintain order in every part of Sudan.

The program also calls for supporting the unity of the internal front as a basis for defense, security, development, and peace. It also calls for the constitutional conference to be convened as soon as possible within the framework of the official acceptance of the Sudanese peace initiative concluded on 16 November 1988.

The program calls for a solution of the national economy crisis and for attention to be given to the issues of production, development, and improvement of the standards of living. It also calls for a balanced foreign policy that serves the homeland's supreme interests and has no involvement with any blocs.

The program also calls for preparations for general elections in accordance with new laws, under which new forces will be guaranteed representation.

Furthermore, State Council Chairman Ahmad al-Mirghani, Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, and 60 leaders of political parties, trade unions, and associations—with the exception of the Islamic Front—signed the national declaration of peace.

The declaration rejects any recourse to violence as a means to arrange regional and political relations. It calls for the unity of the internal front as the basis for national unity. It also calls for strengthening the democratic system and respecting the constitutional establishments.

The declaration calls for the adoption of a national peace strategy that aims at explaining the issue of peace in its curent context to the masses through the political and popular establishments. The declaration states that peace must be a pure Sudanese decision far from foreign intervention and pressing external factors, no matter what they are.

The national declaration of peace stresses that peace is an option to which there is no alternative to achieve national reconstruction tasks, mobilize efforts on the path of national unity, and strengthen the process of development in various domains.

The declaration calls for the convening of the national constitutional conference this year and calls on everyone to abide by its resolutions to preserve national unity.

The declaration calls for the referral of all regional disputes and major political problems to a committee called the National Arbitration Committee [Hay'at al-Tahkim al-Watani] that will discuss all these matters and whose decision will be final and binding on all parties.

'Phased Working Program' Approved

JN0503091889 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0720 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Doha, 5 Mar (WAKH)—Dr Bashir 'Umar, Sudanese culture and information minister, has said that the trend currently prevailing in the Sudanese arena is either to form a government comprising all the political forces represented at the Constituent Assembly, the parliament, or to form a government that also comprises forces not represented at the assembly.

In a statement to the Qatari newspaper AL-SHARQ published today, Dr Bashir 'Umar said the Sudanese political forces have agreed on a phased working program which shall be binding on the new government which will be formed. He added that this program provides for commitment to democracy, to the Constitution, and also to honoring human rights; for supporting and rehabilitating the Armed Forces; for dissolving and disarming militias; and also for an official acceptance of the peace initiative signed by the Democratic Unionist Party [DUP] and the southern Sudan rebels under John Garang in November.

The Sudanese minister went on to say that the program also provides for the drawing up of practical solutions to economic problems, for pursuing a balanced foreign policy that takes into account the country's interests, and also for making preparations for the general elections which are scheduled to be held next year.

Dr Bashir 'Umar said that the parties' leaders have discussed this program with the State Council and added that this program has been approved. However, he said that the National Islamic Front [NIF], the current government coalition partner of the Al-Ummah Party, voiced reservations on the point pertaining to the establishment of peace in southern Sudan. He indicated that efforts are being exerted to convince the NIF of participating in the new government to unify national ranks.

It is to be recalled that the NIF opposes the agreement signed by the DUP with John Garang, as this agreement calls for suspending the Islamic shari'ah laws until the constitutional conference is convened.

In his statement, the Sudanese culture and information minister said that the Al-Ummah Party, to which he belongs, has unanimously nominated Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi to head to the new government and added: There is a conviction regarding the need for the continuation of the dialogue with the Armed Forces so that we will be able to know the opinion of the military on national issues.

The newspaper quoted other sources as saying that the Army will not participate in the new government and that there is a strong tendency to expand the base of the National Defense Council so that the Armed Forces' attitude toward all national issues can be known.

Al-Mahdi Not To Resign

NC0503131989 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1253 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Khartoum, 5 Mar (MENA)—Sudanese Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi has announced that he has changed his mind on his resignation and intends to form a new and expanded government, the work on which will start immediately. He said that the current ministers had given him their resignations on condition that these resignations will be effective as soon as the government base has been expanded, the new broad-based government has been formed, and the greatest degree of unity has been achieved on the domestic front.

In a news conference today attended by a great number of local and international news agency correspondents, Al-Mahdi disclosed that he will start work today to form the government and hold consultations to form this government in the shortest possible time.

The Sudanese prime minister affirmed that the new goverment will be formed in a manner that will achieve the greatest possible degree of unity for the domestic front. He said that the foundations of a unified program for the coming stage will also be laid down. He said this stage will be followed by general elections.

Al-Mahdi said that among the issues which the coming stage's reform program will focus on is the prompt and continued support for the Armed Forces, in addition to the peace issue. Concerning the peace issue, he asserted that other contacts are under way to arrange meetings to resolve it decisively.

The measures and reforms which the new government will carry out, he said, include the expansion of the Defense Council so it will encompass the chief of staff and his aides, as well as the commander in chief of the Armed Forces and the commanders of the three military branches—Infantry, Navy, and Air Force.

He pointed out that what made him continue as a prime minister was a memorandum sent to the State Council today, in which the Armed Forces affirmed their adherence to the constitutional legitimacy and its institutions. Furthermore, he added, the trade unions and associations had stressed to him their concern over the unity of the domestic front and their obligation to halt the strike, work for stability, and raise their performance. The Sudanese prime minister said that a study will now be undertaken to draw up a press charter, by which all newspapers and media in Sudan will abide.

Al-Mahdi To Form New Government

AB0503135089 Paris AFP in French 1328 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Khartoum, 5 Mar (AFP)—Sudanese Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi today announced his decision to pursue his mission at the head of the government. Speaking at a news conference called for foreign media, Al-Mahdi said he had received the resignation letters of all members of his government, adding he was immediately going to begin consultations for the formation of a new government.

The new government, he said, will be extended to all political forces including those not represented in the parliament such as trade unions and socioprofessional associations.

Al-Mahdi Notes 'Assurances'

EA0503163489 Khartoum National Unity Radio in Arabic 1400 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Excerpt] The prime minister, Mr al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, has announced that he will continue on the course of responsibility now that he has received assurances through the head of state's council about the commitment of the Armed Forces to constitutional legitimacy and its institutions. Trade unions also confirmed through the council their concern for the unity of the internal front and their commitment to stop the strikes and to increase production averages, considering this to be their national duty.

Mr al-Mahdi stressed at the news conference which he held at 1300 at the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers that the popular and military integration must be considered as an extreme necessity for the country. His excellency said he would begin as of today extensive moves to form the new government in the shortest possible time. He expressed his hope that the new government would achieve the greatest amount of unity on the internal front. He said that the most important issues of the next stage will be the swift support for the Armed Forces and the cause of peace. [passage omitted]

Attempt on Life of Defense Minister Reported

NC0403132989 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1253 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Khartoum, 4 Mar (MENA)—General 'Abd al-Majid Hamid Khalil, the outgoing Sudanese defense minister, was subjected to an assassination attempt at dawn yesterday, according to political circles here.

Observers link the assassination attempt to the current political atmosphere in the country, noting that it came in the wake of his hard-line position, which led to the current situation.

Some Sudanese papers reported today that the security authorities have neither confirmed nor denied that such an assassination attempt actually took place, adding that the authorities have not released any information on the attempt.

Rebels Claim To Have Chased Troops to Uganda

EA0303184089 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 03 Mar 89

[Text] Reports from our correspondent accompanying "Bright Star" campaign forces in eastern Equatoria say that remnants of the Torit 11th Infantry Brigade, including the commander, Brigadier-General PSC [Passed Staff College] Fadil 'Umar al-Busharah, have been pursued up to the Ugandan border. They entered Ugandan territory 2 days ago at 0800 hours on 1st March 1989. And in respect to the national border, SPLA forces were ordered to stop the pursuit and establish defense positions on the border.

Meanwhile, remnants of the Farajok force were also pursued to the Ugandan border and they too entered Ugandan territory at about 0900 hours on 1st March 1989.

The SPLA will closely monitor what Uganda will do with these refugee soldiers. It is worth noting that the brigadier-general has escaped into Uganda with two tanks and obviously these tanks belong to the SPLA since, like the other tanks and artillery, they would have been captured by the SPLA had the international border not obstructed the pursuit. The decision is, of course, the sole responsibility of the Ugandan Government.

Rebels Claim Capture of Border Town of Nimule

AB0403150889 Paris AFP in English 1506 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Nairobi, March 4 (AFP)—The rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) overran the strategic garrison town of Nimule on the Sudan-Uganda border Friday [3 March], "completing the liberation of Eastern Equatoria", rebel radio said Saturday.

The battle for Nimule on the River Nile, which the radio, monitored here, said lasted just 30 minutes, brings to three the number of strategic garrison towns in south Sudan to fall to the SPLA in one week.

The first was Torit last Sunday followed by Farajok on Wednesday. Farajok and Nimule were both named as new rebel targets by SPLA radio Monday, the day after the fall of Torit.

The rebel radio also said Monday it had set it sights on the southern capital of Juba as its "next logical target" and warned foreigners to leave within 48 hours.

The latest string of rebel victories began with the taking of the strategic garrison of Nasir in the Upper Nile Region at the end of January and the capture of Liria, between Torit and Juba, on February 15.

The radio broadcast a message from SPLA commander John Garang who urged government troops remaining inside besieged Army garrisons to rally to the SPLA. They should join with the rebels to form a new Sudan joint Army command "without any side being defeated or surrendering," he said. Alternatively they could withdraw peacefully since SPLA would not attack them if withdrawal was properly coordinated with the local commander.

He issued a special warning to troops inside the garrison town of Rumbek, in Al-Buhayrat Province, [words indistinct] and "not to listen to the lies of some of their commanders that Khartoum will rescue them." He said most officers in general headquarters, Khartoum, "do not know what a forest looks like" and spent most of their time "selling on the black market." He added that

if Khartoum attempted to relieve the besieged garrisons, the SPLA would block salaries, food, perfumes and "any nice thing that a soldier or bureaucrat in the south longs for from Khartoum.

SUNA: Two Diplomats Expelled From Kenya

EA0503075489 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1430 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Nairobi, 4 Mar—The Kenyan Government today issued (?a decision) to expel minister plenipotentiary Ali Yusuf Ahmad, charge d'affaires of the Sudanese Embassy in Nairobi, and Nasr Hasan Bashir Nast, counsellor at the embassy. They are to leave Kenya within 48 hours as they have been declared persona non grata. The Kenyan Foreign Ministry gave the reasons for the decision in a memorandum delivered to the embassy today, which alleged that the diplomats were involved in activities not in keeping with their diplomatic status, but did not clarify what these activities were.

The envoy Yusuf held a news conference at the beginning of last month in which he refuted Kenyan claims to the Elemi Triangle which lies in the border area between the two countries. He asserted that the triangle was Sudanese territory under a 1914 agreement, which made clear that the Ugandan straight line marks the border between the two countries. He said that Sudan would defend every inch of its territory. He also said that the Elemi Triangle question played a part in the progress of relations between the two countries.

In a statement to SUNA, the minister plenipotentiary, Ali Yusuf, said that their duty as diplomats was to protect Sudanese interests in all political, economic, and security questions, as well as to strengthen relations with the (?countries) [words indistinct] by various means. He said that if the defense of Sudan was the reason behind the expulsion, then he welcomed the decision as Sudan was faced with serious conspiracies which require the people, leadership, and Armed Forces to confront them to preserve the unity of the homeland.

In conclusion, he expressed his good wishes for the prosperity of the Kenyan people and for the improvement and development of relations between the two countries within the framework of respect for international charters and norms and goodneighborliness.

2 Kenyan Diplomats Expelled

EA0503082089 Omdurman Domestic Service in Arabic 1930 GMT 4 Mat 89

[Excerpt] The Kenyan Government has decided to expel the minister plenipotentiary and the counsellor in our embassy in Nairobi as persona non grata and has asked them to leave Kenyan territory within 48 hours. On the principle of quid pro quo, the Sudanese Government has responded by expelling the second and third diplomats in the Kenyan Embassy in Khartoum and they are to leave Sudanese territory within 48 hours. The Kenyan ambassador has been summoned to the Foreign Ministry and handed an official memorandum on this decision. [passage omitted]

Kuwait

Reportage on Visit of PLO's Yasir 'Arafat

Arrives From Abu Dhabi 3 Mar

JN0303180289 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1622 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Brother Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], chairman of the PLO Executive Committee and commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, arrived in Kuwait from Abu Dhabi this afternoon on a visit during which he will chair meetings of the Palestine National Fund board of directors, which is beginning a 3-day conference.

Earlier, brother Abu 'Ammar concluded a 3-day visit to the United Arab Emirates [UAE] where he met with His Highness Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan, UAE president, and a number of senior UAE officials.

Brother Abu 'Ammar was seen off by several officials and Khalid Malak, the Palestinian charge d'affaires in the UAE. [passage omitted]

Makes Arrival Statement

LD0303152489 Kuwait KUNA in English 1435 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Text] Kuwait, March 3 (KUNA)—PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat arrived here Friday from Abu Dhabi on a visit to Kuwait, during which he presides over the three-day meeting of board of the Palestinian National Fund which began earlier today.

'Arafat was received by Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Minister Khalid Ahmed al-Jasir, speaker of Palestine National Council Shaykh 'Abd al-Hamid al-Sa'ih and his deputy Salim al-Zanun in addition to several PLO Executive Committee members.

The Palestinian leader told reporters at the airport he expects the proposed international conference on Middle East peace to be held late this year.

He said he believed U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar cannot but take up the Soviet Union's suggestion that the security council's five permanent members set up a committee that would set the stage for the international parley.

The suggestion has been put forth by Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze during a Middle East tour last month.

'Arafat pointed out that Shevardnadze's proposal calls, among other things, for the five Security Council members to appoint a representative who would assist the U.N. chief on the Palestinian question as was the case with the Iran-Iraq ceasefire.

The Palestinian leader said he would brief his highness the amir of Kuwait and other Kuwaiti officials on the latest political developments regarding the Palestinian question.

'Arafat said the intifadah against the Israeli occupation in the West Bank and Gaza was gaining fresh momentum every day despite an overdose of Israeli brutalities.

'Arafat said a committee which he had proposed to try and formulate a common stand for the PLO and four other Arab countries on the international peace conference would meet at the nearest time possible.

The committee is expected to bring the PLO together with Syria, Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon—the four Arab countries bordering Israel.

'Arafat said Shevardnadze, with whom 'Arafat met in Egypt less than two weeks ago, had told him that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad approved Syrian participation in the committee.

In the light of the Syrian approval, the PLO called for a committee meeting to be held in Cairo, Amman, or even Beirut, the PLO leader said.

"Arafat dismissed the notion that the European Community's support for the Palestinian question has waned and he indicated that—to the contrary—the EC has shown remarkable involvement in efforts to bring about a fair settlement in the Middle East.

He cited the Middle East mission of three European Community ministers and Britain's contacts with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

British-PLO contacts are still underway on more levels than one, 'Arafat said, and indicated that the European Community now shows more understanding of, and sympathy to the Palestinian question.

He cited the fact that the EC had accepted to treat the occupied West Bank and Gaza as separate from Israel and as an independent state.

The PLO leader arrived here from Abu Dhabi where he told a press conference Friday there was a dire need for an emergency Arab summit conference to come up with fresh backing to the Palestinian question.

He denied reports that U.S. President George Bush sent an indirect message to the PLO that the organization put forth fresh peace proposals directly to Israel.

'Arafat will be attending the three-day meeting here for the National Palestinian Council which is discussing ways to lend financial support for the intifada.

Meets Kuwaiti Prime Minister

LD0303171489 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1608 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Text] Kuwait, 3 Mar (KUNA)—The chairman of the PLO, Yasir 'Arafat, met this evening with the Kuwaiti heir apparent and prime minister, Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah in Kuwait.

'Arafat arrived here earlier from Abu Dhabi. During his visit, he will attend the meetings of the Palestinian National Fund.

Nothing has been announced regarding the meeting, which took place in the presence of Khalid Ahmad al-Jasir, the Kuwaiti minister of awqaf and religious affairs, and 'Awn Batash, director of the PLO office in Kuwait.

However, it is believed that discussions centered on the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories, the Palestinian cause, and the efforts to arrive at a peaceful settlement of the Middle East crisis.

Speaks at Rally 5 Mar

LD0503214689 Kuwait KUNA in English 1958 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Kuwait, March 5 (KUNA)—PLO Chairman [Yasir 'Arafat] said Sunday that the Palestinian struggle is currently passing through a delicate stage that requires caution, stressing that the Israelis are trying to crush the Palestinian uprising.

Speaking at a rally, held at the PLO's headquarters here, 'Arafat indicated that Tel Aviv is attempting to instigate war in the already burning area of South Lebanon, noting that there is more than one question mark on the activities of [the] Sixth Brigade of the Lebanese Army inside the Israeli-occupied so-called security zone.

He affirmed to the big crowd at the rally that the Palestinian uprising will continue until the liberation of Palestine and the establishment of a Palestinian state, with Jerusalem as its capital.

He stressed that all of the Palestinian people are fighting as one in the revolution and there are no disputes between the PLO and the leaderships inside the occupied territories.

Oil Minister Cited on BP Shares Profit

JN0503064889 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 2 Mar 89 p 3

[By Sabir 'Abd al-Wahhab in Kuwait]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] On the dispute between Kuwait and British Petroleum [BP], Kuwaiti Oil Minister Shaykh 'Ali al-Khalifah al-'Adbi al-Sabah said there was no dispute. The issue is before the Monopolies and Mergers Commission in Britain.

The crux of the matter is that when we were asked to decrease our share in the company by 10 percent, we sold our shares with compound interest amounting to approximately 30 percent. This sale made us a profit of about $700 million.

He said that what happened was not abusive on the part of BP. Even if it were, we do not mind as long as we stand to make a reasonable profit. He said that Kuwait has had oil investments in the North Sea since 1980. Kuwait also owns gas stations in Britain. He affirmed that Kuwait's behavior on the BP issue was a calculated risk that had made a good profit. [passage omitted]

United Arab Emirates

Paper Says Mosad Planning Anti-U.S. Operation

JN0403140289 Abu Dhabi Domestic Service in Arabic 0930 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Today's issue of the newspaper AL-ITTIHAD reports that Palestinian security services have received important information about a major sabotage operation being planned by the Israeli intelligence service, Mosad, against a U.S. installation in West Germany.

Imaginary Palestinian elements will then claim responsibility for the operation in order to sabotage the American-Palestinian dialogue and European sympathy for the Palestinian cause.

The newspaper cites Palestinian sources in Beirut as saying that this information also cites fresh plans to assassinate a number of Palestinian figures in various East European countries, indicating that Mosad groups had arrived in several European capitals for this purpose in the past 2 weeks.

'Arafat Addresses Abu Dhabi News Conference

LD0403211689 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Prior to leaving Abu Dhabi, the brother leader, Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], held a news conference with Arab and international reporters.

At the beginning of the news conference, brother Abu 'Ammar explained in detail what is taking place inside the occupied land: the continuation of the brave intifadah and escalation of repression and terror by the Zionist occupation army and the savage Zionist settlers.

Afterward, he answered questions from newsmen. He said that UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar should invite the five Security Council permanent member states to a meeting to establish a preparatory committee for an international conference on the Middle East, as suggested by the Soviet Union.

After this proposal by a superpower, said 'Arafat, the UN secretary general has no alternative but to call for a meeting of the foreign ministers of the five great powers. He also pressed the need for the post of delegate on Mideast affairs with Perez de Cuellar.

Brother Abu 'Ammar said that these two initiatives would make it possible to convene an international peace conference within 6 to 9 months.

Brother Abu 'Ammar denied that in dialogue with the United States there had been any discussion of stopping the brave intifadah, or halting acts of self-defense by our people and revolutionaries in southern Lebanon against the Zionist enemy and its persistent aggressions against the camps of our people. He stressed that our revolutionaries and people have the right to defend themselves against Zionist aggression, and this is beyond discussion.

Concerning the intifadah, brother Abu 'Ammar said that it is a revolution of the people, which will continue and will escalate. It will not stop until all our people's objectives are achieved: upholding the cause, victory, and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

Abu 'Ammar also said that Israel is preparing a large operation in southern Lebanon, and that he has informed the five Security Council permanent member states and the Arab League about it.

Leaves Abu Dhabi 3 Mar

JN0303143189 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1335 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 3 Mar (WAKH)—PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat left Abu Dhabi today following a visit to the United Arab Emirates [UAE] that lasted a few days.

During the visit, 'Arafat held talks with UAE President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan and with senior UAE officials.

The talks concerned recent developments in Arab affairs in general and Palestinian affairs in particular and means of supporting the Palestine cause and the continued uprising in the occupied homeland in light of recent developments in international diplomacy.

President Calls for Full Exchange of POW's

JN0503130089 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Excerpts] His Excellency President leader Saddam Husayn has affirmed that the great Iraqi people's defense against Iran's aggression and hostility was not only a national effort of high distinction but also a humanitarian effort of great significance.

In a meeting this morning with Dr Hans Koechhler, chairman of the International Progress Organization, who decorated the president leader with the organization's golden badge of honor, his excellency the president added: I, along with the Iraqi people and leaders, understand the great significance of the award of the International Progress Organization's golden badge of honor.

His excellency the president leader went on to say: You, and all fair-minded persons in other countries, can see the difference between a country that calls for peace while still capable of winning militarily and a country that can not continue on the field of battle. His excellency the president leader pointed out that our call for peace and our determination to achieve it will not falter. He added: We have continued to call for peace and to honor it, and by doing so we are demonstrating the principles of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, which has been struggling for the sake of a better life for Iraq and the Arabs and for humanity in general. [passage omitted]

His excellency the president thanked Koechler for the badge of honor and praised the efforts he and his organization have made for peace. He particularly valued the world progress organization's efforts to bring about an exchange of prisoners of war.

His excellency the president leader announced to Koechler and his delegation that Iraq, for humanitarian and legitimate reasons, declares its immediate readiness to accept a full and comprehensive exchange of prisoners of war. This move, he continued, comes without regard to the outcome of the negotiations and irrespective of the progress made to establish a comprehensive and lasting peace in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 598 and the 8 August 1988 cease-fire agreement.

His excellency the president affirmed that if there is concern, in terms of the negotiations process, over the possibility of returning repatriated prisoners of war to army duty, it is possible to make pledges, to be guaranteed by the United Nations, that these prisoners of war will not be used in the armies until a comprehensive and durable peace between Iraq and Iran is established.

Ministers Approve Anti-Monopoly Measures

JN0403150089 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1425 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, 4 Mar (INA)—During a meeting today chaired by President Saddam Husayn, the Council of Ministers decided to ban the sale of more than one project to one person or group. President Saddam Husayn issued the necessary instructions, stressing the need to distribute the national wealth in a manner that does not lead to the appearance of monopoly. The instructions allow the sale of state projects to a private sector group only if the enterprise has not previously bought one and if the second project will complement the production capacity of the first project.

The Council of Ministers also authorized the competent minister to prevent any person or group winning the bid if the minister is sure that this person or group has previously bought a project from the public sector. In this case, the minister can suspend the sale and refer the issue to higher authorities.

'Arafat Orders 'Tone Down,' Not Halt of 'Terror'

TA0503125589 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat has instructed his men to tone down their operations against Israel, but not to halt them. Our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami reports that this was learned from the transcript of a conversation held between Yasir 'Arafat and a senior European figure in Tunisia. The minutes of the meeting were delivered to Minister Moshe Shahal over the weekend. Thus, 'Arafat can claim that he has not broken the promise given to the United States to refrain from terror activities, a pledge that was a condition for its holding a dialogue with the PLO.

Shamir Rules Out Talks with PLO 'Criminals'

LD0403053489 London PRESS ASSOCIATION in English 0515 GMT 4 Mar 89

[By Chris Moncrieff, PRESS ASSOCIATION chief political correspondent]

[Text] The fiercest rejection yet of the Palestine Liberation Organisation by Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir will be received with dismay by Mrs Thatcher.

She is foremost along Western leaders in trying to persuade Israel to enter into peace talks with the PLO which she says has now shifted its ground significantly towards moderation.

On last night's BBC Television's Newsnight programme Mr Shamir denounced the PLO as criminals, liars and "enemies of our people" and said he would not negotiate with them.

He ruled out any talks with the PLO, rejected any international peace conference and denied that Mr Yasir 'Arafat, the PLO leader, has shifted his position on peace with Israel.

He said: "They are criminals, they are liars, they are enemies of our people. We will not negotiate with the PLO. It is useless. It is a non-starter.

"The PLO cannot be a partner in peace. They are opposed to any peace with us. We will not accept a Palestinian state in this small country—such a state would be a dangerous base of aggression against the state of Israel."

Mr Shamir was asked about his own move "from the gun towards peace" in the 1940's and his membership of a gang.

"There is not any comparison. I do not accept this parallel. We never fought for the destruction of a state as the PLO do," he said. "We never killed civilian people."

When challenged on the Stern gang's admitted killing of the British Minister Lord Moyne in Cairo in 1944, he said: "he was the highest British diplomat in the area. He was a civilian but not an ordinary person."

Mr William Waldegrave, Foreign Office minister of state, who is on a visit to Israel, said Mr Shamir would have to do what circumstances dictated.

Speaking on the same programme, Mr Waldegrave said: "If it is right for Mr Shamir to talk to Mr 'Arafat, if it is right for Israel, he will, because he is a patriotic man.

"Why paint yourself into a corner so it is more difficult to do what may be necessary?"

He went on: "What Israel needs and wants above all is a structure of peace and the defusing of this huge concentration of armaments around it which is ruining its economy and the economies of those around.

"If a peace conference will lead to real security they will go for it."

On Peace 'Path,' Status Quo

TA0503192189 Jerusalem Television in Arabic 1730 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Speech by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir to Likud members of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee in Jerusalem on 5 March—recorded in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles]

[Text] People all over the world are accusing us, accusing me personally, calling me Shamir, the status-quo man. Shamir objects to any movement. He is content with the way things stand. When they say status quo, it includes the whole issue of the intifadah [uprising], terror, the threat of war and so on. To that I say clearly: I am not for the status quo, because it does not include the peace element. And we are for peace. The PLO is not for peace. This is because it is not [as heard] pleased with the current situation. It is not taking any risks. What does the PLO have to lose? It can only gain. Such is the case for the rest of the Arabs. We are the ones who are taking risks.

So, we are for peace, and we have a very logical way. The experience we have acquired through the years proves us right. We are, therefore, against the status quo and for peace, and we have a way of our own to attain it. There are those who immediately loose their temper and ask: What is this way of ours? As if they have already forgotten. It is the way of direct negotiations at the negotiating table, with the Arab states, the Palestinians, and not the PLO. We also have the Camp David accords, some of which have not been fulfilled so far. So far, no better agreements have been invented. No one has so far come up with a plan that is better, more realistic, more logical, that is better for us under the existing circumstances than this one. Who ever heard of a nation or state that signed agreements, after making concessions and

being ready to take more risks, that would agree that a few years later they would be thrown away, that they would be ignored? We must insist on them.

It is true that we hear remarks that not all elements have taken part in Camp David. Jordan, for example, was not involved, nor were the Palestinians. Fine. The Egyptians and the United States were. So if Jordan and others were not party to past agreements, it only means that we can listen, we can examine some ideas for changes. But this is the major path. This is the course. This is a very reasonable course. It is the two-stage course, with an interim arrangements stage and everything that it includes. It includes very serious and positive points in favor of the Arab residents of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip.

On Reaction to U.S.-PLO Talks

TA0603053489 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Reporter Le'a Zinder asked the prime minister for his reaction to the American decision to continue the dialogue with the PLO in spite of the latest terrorist attacks. Was this connected with the report that the PLO is supplying the United States with information about the activities of other terrorist groups in Europe?

[Begin recording] [Shamir] Well, I cannot understand all the considerations of the U.S. Government on this regard. I understand that the U.S. authorities know the true situation, and I still hope that one day they will draw the reasonable conclusions.

[Zinder] Do you think intelligence information has anything to do with their decision?

[Shamir] I think that all this information about these issues is available to everybody. [end recording] [passage omitted]

On Sovereignty in Territories

TA0503203189 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir this evening said that Israel cannot apply its sovereignty over the territories of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip today, but can all in good time.

Our correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that in a speech before the Likud members of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Mr Shamir said that the Palestinian issue is a cause for concern but is not posing a threat. The conflict is not between Israel and what are termed Palestinians, but rather between Israel and the Arab world, which to a large extent has not yet accepted Israel's existence and independence. [passage omitted]

On Peace Talks

TA0603180189 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1700 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir today said that Jordan and Egypt should propose representatives that would constitute a temporary delegation of Palestinians for peace talks. Speaking this evening to a Socialist International delegation, the prime minister added that he hopes that Egyptian President Husni Mubarak would support the Camp David plan once he realizes that an independent Palestinian state is not a realistic solution. The prime minister said that Israel is very interested in solving the problem of the Palestinians under its rule, but that it is unable to handle the issue of the Palestinian refugees scattered around the Middle East.

Britain's William Waldegrave Continues Visit

Britain To Donate to UNRWA

TA0403150189 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1400 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] British Minister of State William Waldegrave said his government is donating 500,000 pounds to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees. During a tour of Gaza, he said that the donation is aimed at showing the Palestinians that they have not been forgotten. He also said that the Israeli occupation of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip is totally incomprehensible.

Meets Palestinian Notables

TA0503133889 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 5 Mar 89 p 2

[Report by Jerusalem-based correspondent Yoram Levi]

[Excerpt] Visiting British Minister of State William Waldegrave met with a group of Palestinians in Nabulus last Friday.

The meeting took place at the home of businessman Basil Kan'an and was attended by Madhat Kan'an, Cairo-Amman Bank Regional director; Shahir Sa'd, secretary general of the West Bank Trade Union Federation; Attorney Ghassan Al-Shak'ah, Bar Association official; Dr Samit Taqtaq, Nabulus Anglican Hospital director; Dr Ramiz al-Hay'at, from the Medical Association; Engineer Hani' 'Arafat, from the Al-Najah University Trust; and Wahid al-Masri, from the Farmers Association.

The meeting dealt with the Palestinian problem and the ways to promote negotiations in the region.

On Friday night, the British minister held a 3-hour meeting at the British Consulate in East Jerusalem. The meeting was attended by a large group of Palestinian notables, including Faysal al-Husayni, director of the

East Jerusalem Institute of Arab Studies; Hanna Sinyurah, AL-FAJR editor; Dr Amin al-Khatib, Charity Association chairman; and others.

One of the participants has said that the forum discussed the political developments in the region, and that the Palestinian notables protested to the British minister the economic pressures exerted by Israel on the residents of the territories, as well as the closure of schools in Judaea and Samaria.

The notables stressed that any political development in the region must include the PLO, and that the only way to achieve that goal is to convene an international peace conference. [passage omitted]

Gaza Figure on Meeting

JN0503144689 Jerusalem in Arabic to the Arab World 1030 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Fayiz Abu Rahmah, chairman of Gaza Bar Association, has met with William Waldegrave, British minister of state at the Foreign Office, who is currently visiting the country. Mr Abu Rahmah talked about this meeting in an interview with colleague Hasan Abu Zayid.

[Begin recording] [Abu Rahmah in progress] ...the British minister about the extent of Britain's concern about the peace march in the Middle East and also that of the European countries. He thinks the time is now appropriate to support the peace march and the peaceful trends in the Middle East. He also thinks that the Palestinian initiative is good and upholds the peace process. Israel, he believes, should now make a responsive initiative.

[Abu Zayid] Has he promised to provide assistance for the Gaza inhabitants?

[Abu Rahmah] I think that, as announced, he donated some $800,000 to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency.

[Abu Zayid] This is to help implement projects in Gaza.

[Abu Rahmah] He was asking about the economic situation in Gaza and especially about the status of the citrus products.

[Abu Zayid] Who are the figures with whom he met?

[Abu Rahmah] Dr Haydar 'Abd al-Shafi, Dr Zakariyah al-Agha, Mansur al-Shawwa, Khalid al-Qidrah, and Mrs Mary Khas.

[Abu Zayid] Has he promised you to convey your ideas to the Israeli officials?

[Abu Rahmah] He said he will meet today with the foreign minister, and, of course, topics of discussion are open. He did not tell us what he [words indistinct]

[Abu Zayid] Lawyer Fayiz Abu Rahmah, thank you very much.

[Abu Rahmah] Thank you. [end recording]

Britain Believes PLO Change

TA0503183189 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1705 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Report by Gid'on Remez on lecture by British Minister of State William Waldegrave before the Israeli Council of Foreign Relations on 5 March in Jerusalem]

[Text] It seems that a high degree of agreement was not achieved in Waldegrave's meetings in Israel. In his lecture, William Waldegrave reiterated the UK assessment that Israel's stay in the territories could only be temporary. It is not needed for the country's safety or the fulfillment of the Zionist vision, to which Britain is committed. He added that Britain is convinced that the PLO has changed and that it feels that the PLO no longer insists on an independent state.

Waldegrave repeated his country's support for an international conference and stressed that if the conference tries to force a solution, not only the Israelis would leave it. In reply to a question I asked him, Waldegrave refrained from stating that Britain would also leave such a conference.

Waldegrave stated a demand that the Arabs take several steps to increase Israel's feeling of safety and mainly that they condemn those PLO factions that still maintain terror, that they accept Israel's existence, and that they stop their struggle against Israel's existence in international organizations.

Waldegrave will leave Israel tomorrow across the Allenby bridge en route to Jordan.

Netanyahu on Talks

TA0503194489 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1705 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu by political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami on 5 March; place not given—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Ben-'Ami] Good evening, Deputy Minister Binyamin Netanyahu.

[Netanyahu] Good evening.

[Ben-'Ami] At first we thought that your meetings with your British counterpart Waldegrave would have ended with a fistfight, although I am exaggerating. I understand though that it was a matter-of-fact and courteous conversation.

[Netanyahu] It was certainly a disappointment to those who had expected a fight. It was, of course, courteous, but there were certainly differences of opinion, as well as several points of agreement. In general, it was a very matter-of-fact discussion, and each presented his positions, although in a very thorough and open manner.

[Ben-'Ami] Even after William Waldegrave's return from his tours of Nabulus and Gaza and his known views, which support the Palestinians and the PLO?

[Netanyahu] Well, I think the man was not aware of our claims first hand and had certainly not seen with his own eyes not only the problems of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip, but also Israel's overall security problems, which I believe he is now beginning to understand. The link between any proposed peace settlement and a security arrangement that will safeguard the State of Israel is, I believe, now becoming clearer to him. I think he now understands that we will not agree to any arrangement that will not guarantee Israel's security and that there is a link between the two.

[Ben-'Ami] In fact, such a clear position, which Foreign Minister Moshe Arens is going to take to Washington and discuss with members of Congress, has—at least according to a report broadcast this morning by our Washington correspondent Shim'on Schiffer—clashed head on with a very clear U.S. position: Either the Israelis come here with a clear plan to advance the process or do not come at all. How do you react to that?

[Netanyahu] I think there are two choices at present: We can continue to cultivate the PLO's unrealistic expectations about a PLO state—which will inevitably bring about instability and then war—or we can progress in a different direction through practical proposals, practical moves in the field, which will calm the atmosphere and create a framework for dialogue. This would start a process to solve concrete problems in the field and would improve the condition of the inhabitants of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip, and I believe would contribute to a better atmosphere for a future settlement. These are the two alternatives.

I would say that the international community—or it is more correct to say the responsible countries and those that are friendly to Israel, such as the United States and Britain—must decide which path they are to take. If they decide to cultivate the Arabs' unrealistic illusions, the peace process will move further away from us. If they decide to cultivate the realistic, pragmatic approach that Israel insists on and is prepared to advance, then I believe then we could further practical and positive processes.

[Ben-'Ami] But still within the Camp David framework.

[Netanyahu] Of course, the Camp David accords are still in force. We are not talking about an accord signed 150 years ago at some Vienna conference. Therefore, I believe that a political framework exists, and we will hear about the details in the coming weeks. There is a readiness here to advance in a positive direction. The question is whether we will receive international support to encourage those Arab partners who are prepared to join such a settlement or whether the opposite will happen; that is, cultivation of the Arabs' illusions, which cannot contribute to the peace process. [passage omitted]

Greek Minister Cancels Visit Over Strained Ties

TA0603093889 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 6 Mar 89 p A7

[Text] The Greek foreign minister will not make a visit to Israel that had been planned as part of the EC effort to become involved in the Middle East conflict. The visit was canceled after Israeli public figures hinted that Israel is opposed to the visit within such a framework. Three EC foreign ministers from France, Spain, and Greece, who are known as the troika, announced several weeks ago that they intended to tour the Middle East and join in the political activity leading to a peace process. The Spanish and French foreign ministers did visit Israel, but hints were extended to their Greek counterpart to cancel his visit because of the strained relations between Israel and Greece.

Energy Minister Proposes Self-Rule in Gaza Strip

TA0603172789 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Energy and Infrastructure Minister Moshe Shahal proposes self-rule in the Gaza Strip under the sponsorship of the two superpowers and with the participation of Egypt. After this arrangement has been implemented, Minister Shahal proposes that Israel Defense Forces troops be pulled out of the area.

In a plan disclosed at a news conference in Jerusalem, Shahal said that a memorandum should be signed with the United States that should contain the following clauses as a basis for negotiations with the Palestinians: They must accept Resolution 242, denounce terror, recognize the State of Israel, give up the right to return, and declare the termination of the conflict with Israel.

Minister Shahal called on the prime minister to disclose his political program before his departure for Washington.

Peres, Frayj Discuss Palestinian Contacts

TA0603132189 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1230 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Vice Prime Minister Shim'on Peres met with Bethlehem Mayor Ilyas Frayj in Peres' office this morning. Our correspondent Yaron Kulas reports that in the 1-hour meeting, Peres and Frayj discussed promoting the contacts between Israelis and Palestinians from the territories. Shim'on Peres has said in the past that he plans to continue his meetings with Palestinian leaders from the territories.

'Arafat Characterized as 'Clown,' 'Liar,'

TA0303184389 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 3 Mar 89 p B11

[Commentary by 'Amos Gilbo'a: "Yasir 'Arafat: Clown and Liar"—boldface as published]

[Text] Yasir 'Arafat is a clown, a joker, not serious; he fantasizes and is also a liar. His aides and the PLO leaders do not look like clowns, but do not differ from him much. This is the main conclusion after seeing them in action three times last week in Cairo. My evaluation that the PLO under 'Arafat has not changed basically and has not given up its aims has been strengthened: They want the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the "territories" at this stage, while keeping all the options open to fulfill the second stage—freeing the entire "Palestinian homeland." He has moderated his positions only as far as declarations go, after painful soul searching and under the pressure of the intifadah [uprising].

'Arafat repeatedly claims that what is taking place in the PLO following the resolutions of the Algiers conference in November 1988 is strategic (that is, giving up previous goals and making do with a small independent state in the "territories") and not tactics (that is, propaganda and public relations). He is lying! He is heading a fantastically well-oiled, sophisticated propaganda machine operating on a broad spectrum to different target audiences (Americans, U.S. Jews, Europeans, various types of Israelis, Palestinians, etc). The campaign has a single repetitive tune for each target audience: We the Palestinians are striving for peace, our hand is stretched out in peace, and our dream is peace in the spirit of the wolf shall dwell with the lamb—for each target audience it has a verse in a suitable song. My aim is to present five subjects from the PLO propaganda campaign that I witnessed in Cairo:

—Israeli Arabs. An Israeli female Arab journalist (who prefers to call herself a Palestinian without adding anything) asked 'Arafat something like the following: You talk about a Palestinian state, but what will happen then to Israeli Arabs? Her real question was: What will happen then to us, Palestinians with Israeli citizenship? Will we be included in that state or not? Will you then drop us? What will our fate be? Since she spoke Arabic, he responded in the same way: "The talks will solve that problem. We will discuss it." He apparently consoled her. And why not? If 'Arafat himself promises her that "in talks" (and by this he obviously means talks within the international conference framework) the problem of Israeli Arabs will also be brought up. But things were whispered into his ear, and he added something like: "We are referring to the occupied territories."

And we are supposed to know where the truth lies—in what 'Arafat replied or in what those who whispered to him said, and what exactly are "occupied territories." Are they only the territories of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip? But each Israeli citizen must remember two basic facts: A. Most Israeli Arabs view the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and support the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. B. To the PLO, Israeli Arabs compose the inner circle of two additional Palestinian circles: Palestinians in the "territories" and Palestinians outside the "territories." This derives from articles 4 and 5 of the Palestinian Covenant. Article 5 defines it clearly: Palestinians are Arab citizens who were normally resident in Palestine until 1947, this includes both those who were forced to leave and those who stayed in Palestine. Anyone born to a Palestinian father after that date, whether inside or outside Palestine, is a Palestinian.

—The Palestinian Covenant. In the courtyard of the Soviet ambassador's house in Cairo—with the Soviet foreign minister silent, but with wide-open eyes standing next to him—'Arafat was asked if he plans to revoke the covenant. In an agitated tone, he replied: "You should ask them," and did not explain. Whom did he mean? The Russians? The corps of journalists? It is impossible to know, of course. All we know is that he begged the question. On another occasion, in a packed hall, he replied to a similar question: "When we have an independent state, we will prepare a new covenant." On previous occasions in other world capitals, 'Arafat replied with the following formula in several variations: We will revoke the covenant when Israel revokes its map (supposedly hanging in the Knesset) which shows Israeli rule from the Nile to the Euphrates. His aides, more sophisticated and without fantasies, take the trouble to explain that the Algiers resolutions and 'Arafat's speech in Geneva in fact revoked the Palestinian Covenant.

One must be a complete ignoramus not to understand that over the years the PLO has deviated from its declarations and resolutions on several issues referred to in the covenant. One must also, however, be an idiot not to understand that most of the issues in the covenant continue to exist, not a single PLO declaration has deviated from them, and they have not been changed. This is not accidental, because maintaining the covenant and not making any changes to it enable the PLO not to give up its long-term aims and not to damage its basic concepts.

—The right of return for the refugees of 1947-48. When 'Arafat was asked about that, he replied approximately as follows: The Jews have been defending their right of return for thousands of years, so how can they take this right away from Palestinians who want to return to their homes and lands after dozens of years? It is a holy right. In fact, UN Resolution No 194 recognizes that right, and Israel accepted it! (A total lie, astonishing! It is obvious Israel did not agree to it.)

When he was asked again if this refers to the Palestinians' right of return to "the territories" or to the State of Israel within the 1967 borders, 'Arafat replied: That will be solved in talks on the basis of UN Resolution 194, which

gives the Palestinians the right to return to their lands and homes or to receive financial compensation. This is a right answer and one to the point, whose obvious meaning is: Sir, what are you talking about? It is obvious that we are not referring to "the territories." We are referring to the UN resolution of December 1948 that refers to the situation existing then; to all the locations, such as 'Akko, Tiberias, Zefad, Ramla, Lod, Yafo, and hundreds of villages and millions of dunams of land.

—Terrorism. All the questions on this issue infuriated 'Arafat and made him extremely nervous. His response to all of them was a sort of propaganda tape in the following formula: We are defending ourselves (including Lebanon!). Israel is the terrorist; you should point your questions and your accusations at it. In fact, what do you want from me?

I intend to believe that 'Arafat himself is not interested in carrying out terrorist actions from the Lebanese border (in case they mess up the PLO propaganda campaign and sabotage the dialogue with the United States). Habash's and Hawatimah's organizations (his partners to the Algiers resolutions) do not give a damn, and he does not have total control over his own fighters, not at all.

—Fantasizing and the open lie. 'Arafat claimed with excitement and total cynicism that the Israeli Cabinet adopted a secret decision to kill him, that Mosad squads received the appropriate instructions, and that he and his men are prepared. These claims come from the Ali Baba tales told to small children. Still, they were said by a leader, the chairman of the "Palestine Liberation Organization" (let us not forget that is the full title behind the PLO acronym). Whoever believes the story about ordering his killing will probably also believe his declarations about accepting Security Council Resolution 242, renouncing terrorism, and recognizing Israel—and he is a fool. And to whoever does not believe the story, I shall ask: Why then should you believe his declarations of moderation?

It is hard for me to believe that the present PLO leadership under 'Arafat—which unlike all leaderships of "National Liberation Movements" is living in luxury and corruption outside the territory of the uprising carried out by its people—will be able to continue to become more flexible in its declarations—unless it is presented with an independent state in "the territories" on a silver platter.

Are we now facing the beginning of a long-term process that will end with the present leadership being replaced by another?

Further on Incidents, Casualties in Territories

Tear Gas Used To End Riots

TA0303192889 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1815 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Text] Two firebombs were hurled about an hour ago from the Muslim Quarter toward the Jewish Quarter in Jerusalem's Old City. One firebomb ignited on the window sill of a house and the other on the road, but there were no casualties.

Our correspondent Uri Kohen-Aharonov reports that a short time earlier police and Border Police used tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse riots that had broken out in the village of Silwan.

Stonethrowers Teargassed

TA0403185989 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] There were several stoning incidents in the Ramallah area today. Our correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that the Israeli army used tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse the stone throwers and made nine arrests. There were no special incidents in the Gaza Strip today.

Girl Hurt by Stones

TA0403203789 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Arab residents this evening blocked the road to the settlement of 'Enav in Samaria and stoned Israeli vehicles. A girl traveling in one of the vehicles was wounded in the arm and rushed to the hospital. The Israeli army dispersed the rioters. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that 'Enav residents are demanding better security for their settlement.

Stones were hurled tonight on the Bet Shemesh road at a vehicle in which two Arabs from Hebron were traveling. Our correspondent reports that the driver was slightly hurt. Searches were carried out at the spot, but nobody so far has been detained.

2 Hurt in Stoning

TA0503104789 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1000 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Two young Arabs were wounded by gunfire in Ramallah today during a stone-throwing incident. Our correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that the army and the police are investigating the circumstances of the shooting.

Further on 3-4 Mar Incidents

TA0503122689 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 5 Mar 89 p 8

[Report by Joel Greenburg and Mikhal Sela']

[Excerpts] Palestinian inmates at the IDF's [Israel Defense Force] Qezi'ot detention camp are entering the second week of their hunger strike against prison conditions, and prison officials are refusing to negotiate with them, according to reports from their lawyers.

Military sources have confirmed the strike, but reject the prisoners' charges. [passage omitted]

In the West Bank over the weekend, troops shot and wounded seven Palestinians in clashes with protesters, according to Palestinian reports. Nabulus remained under curfew for the ninth consecutive day, and residents reported fresh searches by soldiers.

According to reports from the casbah, soldiers using ladders descended from rooftops to make surprise raids on apartments. Residents said troops patrolling the area appeared nervous, and were ordering people away from windows.

A rock dropped from an upper-story window killed Samal Rishon [Staff Sergeant] Binyamin Meisner nine days ago. Most of Nabulus has been under curfew since the incident. In clashes yesterday at the Tulkarm refugee camp, a 10-year-old boy was wounded in the stomach by a plastic bullet, according to local reports. A 25-year-old man was wounded in the abdomen in clashes in Tulkarm on Friday, Palestinians said.

In other incidents reported by Palestinians Friday, two persons were wounded in Janin, one at Ya'bad, near Janin, one at Tubas, north of Nabulus, and one at Ramallah.

The IDF had no reports of casualties. [Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew on 5 March, in a report on page A2 adds: "Last night, a preplanned ambush, directed at two Israeli cars driving on the trans-Samaria highway that were the target of stones and a Molotov cocktail, miraculously ended without injuries. The incident happened outside the village of 'Uzrayn, near the Tappuah junction. The two vehicles slowed down after seeing a stone barrier and burning tire in the middle of the road. Several youths who had hidden in the village outskirts hurled stones at an Ari'el resident's car, shattering one of its windows. After the car was hit, the driver slowed down, at which point a Molotov cocktail was thrown in his direction. The firebomb missed and exploded on the road. Passing drivers alerted the army, which searched the area."]

In clashes in the Gaza Strip, Palestinians reported a 5-year-old girl and a 6-year-old boy hospitalized with beating injuries.

In other developments, the director of health services in the Gaza Strip Civil Administration announced his resignation, under pressure from uprising activists, Palestinians said. Underground leaflets have called on Palestinians working in the Civil Administration to resign.

A Communist leaflet issued yesterday in the Gaza Strip, signed by the "The Progressive Force," urged Palestinians to contribute to a fund to support the uprising, to reclaim fallow land, plant crops and raise chickens and goats as a step toward self-reliance, store food, forgo purchases of luxury goods, and boycott Israeli products. The leaflet condemned the Islamic Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] for calling strike days in addition to those set by the "Unified Leadership of the Uprising" and said such strikes worsened Palestinians' already difficult economic situation. [passage omitted]

Soldier Stabbed in Nabulus

TA0503122889 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] A soldier was stabbed and slightly injured approximately 1 hour ago in the Nabulus casbah. He received treatment on the spot. Our correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that the assailant was shot and wounded. The army is continuing to carry out arrests and conduct searches in Nabulus. The curfew on the city remains in force.

2 Injured in Arab-Jewish Fight

TA0503132089 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] A fistfight between Jews and Arabs broke out in the Hebron market this morning after stones were hurled at a house in the Jewish Quarter. Inhabitants of the quarter said a girl and a woman were hurt by the stones. The police detained an Arab woman from Hebron.

Youth Shot by Rubber Bullet

TA0503174189 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] A 17-year-old youth was wounded by a rubber bullet during a dispersal of stone throwers in Rafah, our army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe reports. The curfew on Bayt Hanun continues.

4 Arabs Shot 4-5 Mar

TA0503175789 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Excerpts] Residents of the Nabulus casbah will have to seal windows and doors facing the street and entrances to roofs and abandoned rooms with iron nets. Israeli soldiers called out to the residents of the casbah through bullhorns that they will be held responsible for making sure that no stones are thrown from their homes. The Nabulus curfew remains in effect, while soldiers continue their wide-ranging searches and detentions. [passage omitted]

Two people were shot and wounded yesterday in the Tulkarm refugee camp when stone throwers were dispersed. They were transferred to the hospital in the town, but the incident was reported only today.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1500 GMT on 5 March reports that "in Ramallah two masked Arab youths were shot and wounded by Israeli soldiers during a stone-throwing incident."]

4 Wounded in Jabalyah Camp

TA0503202389 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1930 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] This afternoon four youths, residents of the Jabalyah refugee camp, were wounded by plastic bullets fired by Israel Defense Forces soldiers at a group of stone throwers. The four were taken to Al-Ahali hospital in Gaza. The condition of one of the wounded was described as medium, while the other three suffer slight wounds.

No Injuries in Explosion

TA0603072489 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0700 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] A charge exploded a short while ago at a soldiers' hitchhiking station at Ra'anana junction. No one was hurt, and there was no damage. Our correspondent Yafa Glick reports that a large force of police arrived at the site and launched an investigation.

The curfew imposed on Nabulus following the murder of Sergeant Binyamin Meisner 10 days ago has been lifted.

Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that, in the vicinity of Hebron, the army shot and wounded a youth who was throwing stones at buses driving workers to Israel. The incident took place near the village of Duma.

Nabulus Strike Lifted

TA0603120289 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] A general strike is being staged in Judaea and Samaria today to protest the closure of education establishments. In Nabulus, where the curfew was lifted, shops were also closed. Quiet prevailed in Nabulus today.

Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that at this hour some 130 detainees are being released from Qezi'ot detention center. They are being taken to the Gaza Strip.

Ehud Olmert, the minister in charge of the Arab sector, says that he does not intend to take legal steps to limit the activities of the Islamic Movement. During a visit to Haifa University, Minister Olmert told our correspondent Yo'el Dar that he intends to hold talks and maintain contacts with representatives of all the Arab population, including members of the Islamic Movement. He noted, however, that the Arab residents should be concerned by the movement because it signifies a turn for the worse.

2 Shu'fat Schools Closed

TA0603123489 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Two schools in the north Jerusalem neighborhood of Shu'fat were closed today until further notice. Our police affairs correspondent Moshe Nussbaum reports that the two schools, one for boys and the other for girls, were the scene of recurrent disturbances by students. In addition to other things, they disrupted traffic on the Jerusalem-Ramallah road and staged disturbances in and outside the school.

Gaza Prisoner Dies

TA0603144689 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1400 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Three people died today in the territories. In Bayt Lahiyah in the Gaza Strip, 19-year-old Ahmad Ramadan al-'Ajani was killed during a riot this afternoon. His body was taken to Al-Shifa' Hospital; the corpse was later snatched. Later, two slightly wounded residents of Bayt Lahiyah arrived at 'Amadani Hospital in Gaza. The security forces imposed a curfew on the area.

Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that this afternoon in the village of Salim in the Nabulus District, a youth was killed and another was wounded. A confrontation took place in the village between Israel Defense Forces [IDF] soldiers and local youths. The IDF is investigating both deaths.

In the Gaza prison, a security prisoner died this morning. The Prison Service is examining the circumstances of his death. [passage omitted]

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1430 GMT on 6 March adds: "In the Hebron District, a masked Arab youth who threw stones at an Egged bus carrying Arab workers was shot and wounded by IDF soldiers. An Arab resident was wounded during stonethrowing incidents in Silwad in the Ramallah District."]

Man Dies Under Interrogation

TA0603172189 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Thirty-two-year-old Mahmud Yusuf al-Masri of Rafah, the security prisoner who died in Gaza Prison last night, was in the Shin Bet's interrogation room at the time of his death. Our police affairs correspondent Moshe Nussbaum reports that the prisoner was taken to prison a few days ago and had at all times since then been kept in the Shin Bet's interrogation room. Security sources say that the man suffered from an ulcer and was treated for his ailment shortly before his death. The investigation into his death was entrusted to the investigation department at Police National Headquarters; the Prison Authority has also set up a commission of inquiry.

Knesset Member Yosi Sarid of the Citizens Rights Movement, a member of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, requested that the findings of the investigation be submitted to the committee shortly.

Al-Rifa'i on Amendment of Electoral Law

JN0303212289 Amman Television Service in English 2000 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Text] The prime minister, Mr Zayd al-Rifa'i, has said that the main concern of his majesty the king is to settle Arab differences and to foster solidarity among Arab states. His majesty the king, he said, is devoting his time and efforts to achieve this goal. The prime minister said Jordan has exerted efforts to resolve inter-Arab differences and some of these efforts have materialized into positive results. These efforts, he said, will continue until the objectives behind them are met.

In an interview with the London-based AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT newspaper published today, Mr al-Rifa'i said the peace process to resolve the Middle East problem can only begin at an international peace conference which can only be convened under an agreement among the permanent members of the Security Council. When agreement is reached, the prime minister went on to say, the United States should play a major role in changing the Israeli position towards peace.

Mr al-Rifa'i noted that on the Arabs' part, obstacles in the way of convening an international conference have been removed, and the only obstacle that has remained is Israel's attitude.

Mr al-Rifa'i said that the aim of Jordan's legal and administrative disengagement with the West Bank was to give prominence to the Palestinian identity and to enable the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, to carry out its mission without leaving room for duplicity of representation. Jordan, he went on to say, wanted to show the world that it supports Palestinian action aimed at regaining the national inalienable legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and enabling them to exercise their right to self-determination on their national soil which would become the Palestinian state.

Mr al-Rifa'i described relations with the PLO as excellent. These relations, he said, are based on confidence and assured desire to serve the Palestinian people to achieve their national objectives.

Asked about the economic situation in Jordan, the prime minister said: It is not an economic but rather a financial crisis resulting from nonfulfillment to Jordan of Arab financial obligations decided at the Baghdad summit conference.

The prime minister noted that Saudi Arabia has fulfilled all its financial obligations to Jordan and voiced thanks to the Saudi monarch King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz. Jordan, Mr al-Rifa'i asserted, will overcome this difficult period and the Jordanian dinar will regain its strength and rise in value against the U.S. dollar until it reaches a point reflecting the real value, not the value set.

The prime minister said a committee drafting the electoral law in Jordan is about to complete its work and to submit its proposals and recommendations to amend the electoral law in force. The new law will exclude the West Bank which Jordan views as part of the Palestinian state it has recognized.

Editorial Welcomes UK Minister, Policy

JN0603100489 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 6 Mar 89 pp 1, 21

[Editorial: "A Wise and Brave Policy"]

[Text] British Minister of State William Waldegrave arrives in Jordan today in a very optimistic atmosphere after frequently taking positive positions and making constructive statements on the Palestine question. He will find a warm and appropriate welcome by all those who view his statements as the direct expression of profound truth, justice, and fairness.

William Waldegrave's public positions on various aspects of the current situation in the Middle East represent a British policy that is wise, brave, and farsighted. In addition, he brings an unfamiliar frankness to the policy of this major European state on the Israeli occupation of the Arab territories and continuous confiscation of the Palestinian people's rights.

The British minister of state spoke to the Israeli leaders very clearly on the changes in the world, the demise of the colonialist era, the futility of the occupation, the uselessness of brutal measures to suppress the Palestinian people's intifadah [uprising], and other facts, which Tel Aviv did not want to hear.

Hence, William Waldegrave, who was unwelcome in Israel and ignored by the Israeli prime minister and other officials, will receive an enthusiastic welcome and great appreciation not only by the leaders and people of Jordan, but also by all Arabs who found in the British minister's statements all that they had asked Britain to declare or affirm.

While warmly welcoming Mr Waldegrave, we hope that his brave statements and positions, which apparently reflect Mrs Margaret Thatcher's fundamental policy, will push the European position one step further forward and make the U.S. Administration review its Middle East policy. Perhaps that will remove the remaining obstacles on the path to a just, durable, and comprehensive peace in this region.

Fadlallah Calls for Resolution of Hostage Issue

NC0403080889 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0630 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Excerpts] In his Friday sermon yesterday, Ayatollah Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah called for resolving the hostages issue for humanitarian reasons after it has become a political case and issue.

He welcomed the security and economic relaxation taking place in the country, but said that the security and economic problems had been made by those administering the crisis in Lebanon. He said that the political situation, the conditions, and the regional complexities are still the same. [passage omitted]

Views Rushdie Issue, Hostages

NC0603085789 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 4 Mar 89 p 4

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] In the Friday sermon he delivered yesterday in Imam al-Rida Mosque in B'ir al-'Abd, Scholar Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah focused on Imam Musa ibn Ja'far al-Kazim and "The Satanic Verses" issue. He said that Imam Khomeyni is the only figure in the Islamic world who has confronted the arrogant world and feared no reproach for his stand. He was not dissuaded because some person or French official would call him a criminal. He stood up and said: This man, Salman Rushdie, offended all Muslims when he offended God's prophet. Muslims must confront him.

Fadlallah added: Those who fear insults and a possible loss of confidence in us by world public opinion will remain weak before any invader or mighty person. He noted that Imam Khomeyni has succeeded in rousing Islamic vigor worldwide, which has caused many to tumble and others to retreat.

Fadlallah attacked those who use freedom of expression as an excuse. He said: What freedom? Is it freedom of your expression to insult us and exert pressure on us, or is it our freedom to reject your arrogance? This is not freedom. Freedom of obscenity is not freedom.

In his talk about the life of the imprisoned imam, Fadlallah said: In the same way that we do not accept the unjust imprisonment of Muslims, we also do not accept the unjust imprisonment of non-Muslims. This is why we have rejected the principle of kidnapping, either here or abroad, as long as the kidnappee has not committee any crime or treason. It is not enough to say that he is a spy and a traitor and have him released in the end. This is not permissible.

He added: Although we understand the motives of the kidnappers, we still say that this is wrong. We must not deprive any person of his freedom, particularly if he is innocent. We call for solving this issue on the basis of its humanitarian dimension. A person should not be detained indefinitely because of complications in the political atmosphere. [passage omitted]

Fadlallah accused Palestinian officials of providing the U.S. and French intelligence organs with intelligence data on the fundamentalists. He said: We are watching how the PLO is making concessions all over the world.

He did not give any further details on this, but asked: How can we get Palestine back when we allow these people to control the revolutionaries? [passage omitted]

Blames West for Severed Ties

NC0303081689 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0630 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Text] In a statement to AFP commenting on renegade Salman Rushdie's book, Ayatollah al-Sayyib Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah has stated that the West responded to Rushdie's issue in a frenzied manner, turning this issue into a political matter so as to sever relations with the Islamic Republic. He affirmed that the ball is now in the Western states' court and not in Iran's.

Responding to a question on the principle of intellectual freedom, Ayatollah Fadlallah said that there can be no absolute freedom when the matter involves the freedom of the individual against the freedom of the nation. In such an event, it is natural that the freedom of the nation comes first. He concluded by saying: Islam is not opposed to the freedom of opinion. Indeed, it encourages it. We are prepared to debate a book that casts doubt on the religion in a rational, intellectual dialogue but not in an unscientific and obscene manner in which the Islamic sanctities are attacked.

PSP Leader Junblatt Holds News Conference 5 Mar

NC0503105389 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1000 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] At a news conference he held in Al-Mukhtarah before noon today, PSP leader Walid Junblatt announced the suspension of his initiative regarding the repatriation of the displaced. He noted that the influential Christian figures have not fulfilled their duty in this regard. He said that those who killed Anwar al-Fatayri were urged on by the eastern area and are being protected there.

He said: I gave the names to the members of the executive committee concerned with the return of the displaced people. I said that if the murderer is in the protection of the eastern area, don't ask me to return the displaced. The East Beirut leaders want the return according to the Israeli way. Junblatt added: Bkirki [the seat of the Maronite Patriarchate] has opened its doors to the murderer of Anwar al-Fatayri.

In response to a question, he said that the murder of Al-Fatayri is an Israeli message through local tools from the eastern area. The assassin is a tool of a political party in that area.

Junblatt said he thought that the Lebanese war was still at its beginning and the isolationist parties are benefiting from Arab reaction, particularly Iraq. Weapons are pouring into the eastern area at an amazing rate, he said, asking: Does His Excellency Prime Minister Salim al-Huss not see this?

Answering a question about the Army's dispatch to the South, Junblatt explained that this step is out of place. The issue of the South cannot be solved in Lebanon, he said.

Answering a question about the Syrian position, Junblatt said: Syria has been and will remain the principal support of the nationalists in Lebanon. The plot in Lebanon is against us and against Syria.

Regarding the question of simultaneous elections and reforms, Junblatt said: We support reforms at the same time, but who can guarantee this? The Chamber of Deputies, Salim al-Huss, Bkirki? Patriarch Sfayr has said that the Christians in Lebanon will not give up the powers of the president of the republic so they do not become like Iraq's Christians. We Arab nationalists, both Christians and Muslims, Junblatt stated, will not agree to be like the blacks in South Africa. Therefore, let the conflict continue. Junblatt added: They want Lebanon for a certain group only. Therefore, I might not go to Kuwait personally, but instead entrust my colleagues in the national movement to go because they can do the job.

Against 'Policy of Concessions'

NC0503201189 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1400 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Excerpts] PSP leader Walid Junblatt has warned against the policy of concessions which will make us lose all of our cards. At a news conference in Al-Mukhtarah shortly before noon today, Junblatt said: They opened the Beirut port crossing without compensation, only to enable some of the Beirut businessmen to make profits. The policy of Dr Salim al-Huss is not national. It is a policy confined to issues pertaining to Beirut and part of Beirut. [passage omitted]

Junblatt continued: We asked Dr al-Huss to declare Al-Jiyah port legitimate because, as far as I know, all the Lebanese ports are legitimate, including Tyre, Al-Mudawwar port in Beirut, and Tripoli. We therefore ask him to declare all these ports legitimate. If we are to face a sea blockade in the near future, we will have to ask him to adopt a stand on this issue.

Touching on the Army issue, Junblatt said: Quite suddenly, all of us, and even some of those whom we assisted to join the national arab Army, have forgotten that we, as a national force, have very considerable reservations about the Army. It is the Army which assassinated Ma'ruf Sa'd and Rashid Karami, gutted the southern suburb, and destroyed the mountain area. This Army is still being led by a group of U.S. experts in Al-Yarzah. Before we acquit those who wear uniforms stained with the blood of the people, we must re-examine the Army structure and see that the Army pursues a national Arab policy. Only then will we declare that those wearing camouflage uniforms bedecked with yellow stars are innocent.

Junblatt said that the dispute between 'Awn and Ja'ja' is evidently a tactical one. It was not generated over national issues; rather, it is a mere dispute over the division of the spoils. [passage omitted]

On the Bayt al-Din initiative, Junblatt said: I declare the termination [inha'] of my initiative regarding the repatriation of the displaced persons. The church and the spiritual and political figures in East Beirut must expose those who plotted against and assassinated Anwar al-Fatayri, and who are residing in East Beirut. I will not give names nor will I stoop to the level of petty agents. The blood of Anwar al-Fatayri is more precious than all the displaced persons. Let this be clear to everyone.

Amal's Birri Comments on Army's Move to South

NC0403072589 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 0530 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Amal Movement leader Minister Birri has expressed surprise at the interpretations given to the Army's dispatch to the South. He disclosed that the move was the result of his proposal and at his insistence. He said that the armored vehicles used by the Army were the property of the Amal Movement. The movement's offices are also at the disposal of the Army, he said, adding that this move lays down the correct basis for confronting Israel. It confirms that the Amal Movement is seeking to consolidate security and does not want to assume responsibility for security in the South or anywhere else. He said that this move is just the beginning of a process which must be completed.

Minister Birri was speaking at a news conference yesterday afternoon. [passage omitted]

Ja'ja' Relative Assassinated; Gunmen Deploy

NC0403150489 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1400 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Joseph Kayruz, brother-in-law of Lebanese Forces commander Samir Ja'ja', was killed today in an ambush in Kasrawan. Kayruz was on his way home from the residence of Emile Rahmah in Sarba, where he offered his condolences on the death of the latter's brother.

It is reported that one of those who planned the ambush is a member of the Sukkar family. Lebanese Forces militiamen were deployed in Al-Zalqah, Al-Judaydah, and Juniyah as soon as the news of the ambush became known.

Planes Attacked by Fire From Iqlim al-Kharrub

NC0603093289 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0922 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] We have received the following news report from the editor's desk: Antiaircraft fire originating from the Iqlim al-Kharrub area was directed at Lebanese warplanes, which conducted reconnaissance sorties over the coast in the area at approximately 1040 today.

Naval Operations Room Resumes Activity

NC0603095189 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Excerpt] The naval operations room resumed its activity this morning. The room is in charge of monitoring ships entering and leaving Lebanon's territorial waters, preventing ships from entering illegal ports and, if necessary, intercepting those that do not respect orders.

The operations room will keep in direct contact with all ships once they enter Lebanon's territorial waters.

Upon the instructions of Major General Edgar Ma'luf, minister of public works, all ships must furnish the authorities with data pertaining to the name and type of ship, to the cargo it is carrying, and to the date of arrival in Beirut port.

In the event any ship attempts to change course and sail to an illegal port, force will be used to deal with it.

For this purpose, Lebanese warplanes have been reconnoitering the territorial waters along the Lebanese coast since 1115. The Air Force will keep in direct contact with the joint operations room. [passage omitted]

Source on Role of Room

NC0603123389 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] The naval operations room resumed its activity today after an absence of 5 years. A source in the operations room explained the nature of its work, saying: This room includes representatives of the air and naval forces, Maritime Transport Directorate, Investments and Customs Departments, public security, and Internal Security Forces. Their duty is to prevent ships from entering the illegal ports and to monitor their course from and to the territorial waters. This room has no connection with the port's activities.

Another source in the room denied that the operations room has imposed any type of siege on any ports.

The same source denied that any military aircraft had flown over Al-Jiyah port or that fire had been directed at it.

Group Attacks Syrian Center in Tripoli 4 Mar

NC0403073489 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] The 16 January Organization for the Liberation of Tripoli has declared that one of its groups attacked a Syrian occupation forces' center in Bab al-Tabbanah in Tripoli early today. A number of casualties were inflicted on the Syrian special units. A military ambulance was seen transporting the casualties from the scene of the operation. The organization issued a statement on the operation, stressing that it will teach the Syrian occupation forces an unforgettable lesson.

Resistance Operations Result in Casualties

NC0503165889 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 1530 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] In the resisting South, according to a statement isued by the Joint Operations Room of the Lebanese Resistance Battalions-Amal and the Islamic resistance, one of the Imam al-Sadiq groups set up an ambush in the Dayr Siryan area at 1400 today. When an enemy patrol consisting of a half-tracked vehicle carrying eight personnel passed by, the resistance fighters directed a hail of rockets and machinegun bullets at it.

The vehicle was completely destroyed and those in it were killed. The vehicle was on fire. Immediately afterward, the Zionist enemy and his agents shelled the towns of Zawtar al-Sharqiyah and Zawtar al-Gharbiyah and the Al-Litani river valley in a frenzied manner, using mortars and tanks. The group returned safely to base.

The martyrs Muhammad Sa'd and Khalil Jradi groups of the Lebanese Resistance Battalions-Amal detonated an explosive device as a vehicle belonging to the enemy and his agents was passing on the 'Alman-Al-Shumariyah road. The vehicle was destroyed and those who were in it were killed or wounded. An Amal group also used rockets to attack three agent positions in the Jazzin area. The agents' radio has admitted the attack. Meanwhile, four helicopters flew over the South.

Explosive Dismantled Near Amal Official's Home

NC0503093589 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0900 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Military expert Walid 'Uthman dismantled an explosive device planted near the house of deputy Amal Movement leader 'Akif Haydar in 'Ayn al-Tinah in West Beirut at 0845 today. The device weighed 1.2 kg, was equipped with a timer and detonator and was primed for explosion.

Officials To Discuss 'Arafat, Al-Asad Meeting

JN0503075689 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0730 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 5 Mar (WAKH)—News reports said here today that an important meeting will be held in Damascus soon between Syrian Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam and Fatah Central Committee member Salah Khalaf, also known as Abu Iyad, who will visit Damascus at the head of a high-level Palestinian delegation.

The newspaper AL-ITTIHAD quoted a prominent political source as saying that the meeting will discuss the final arrangements for a reconciliation meeting between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat.

Kuwaiti Minister Briefs Al-Asad on Lebanon

JN0503164789 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1615 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Damascus—At 1245 today, President Hafiz al-Asad received Shaykh Sabah al-Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah, Kuwaiti deputy prime minister and foreign minister. Attending the meeting were Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and Kuwaiti Ambassador in Damascus Ahmad 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Jasim.

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad conveyed a message from Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah, amir of Kuwait, to the president. Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad briefed the president on the third phase of the work of the Arab committee on Lebanon. The president wished the committee success in helping the Lebanese brothers attain national reconciliation. Talks were held on Lebanese and regional affairs.

Conference Criticizes 'Satanic Verses,' UK

JN0503151889 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1440 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Damascus, 5 Mar (SANA)—The fourth conference of the Syrian Awqaf Ministry's directors and muftis has affirmed that Islam is too lofty and sublime to be harmed by the words of bitterness and hatred uttered by the colonialist and Zionist forces against all mankind.

In a statement issued today on the book "The Satanic Verses" by Salman Rushdie, the conference added that such authors use lies to exploit differences and stir up sedition—things which cannot be accepted by anyone belonging to any world faith or sect. The statement said the Thatcher government had supported this book on the pretext of defending human rights and spreading democracy. The British Government also supported the book together with world Zionism, colonialism, and imperialism, the statement said.

AL-BA'TH Cited on Shamir UK TV Interview

JN0503080489 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0545 GMT 5 Mar 89

[From the press review]

[Text] The newspaper AL-BA'TH's editorial discusses the reality underlying Israeli policy, which seeks to perpetuate the occupation and rejects any just peace arrangement in the Middle East.

Under the headline "Shamir Rejects Peace Because He Opposes Withdrawal," AL-BA'TH says: Enemy Prime Minister Shamir views the Arab territories occupied in 1967 as liberated rather than occupied territories.

The paper adds: Shamir said this in an interview with British television the day before yesterday. These new-old statements from Shamir are not meant for domestic consumption only, as some are attempting to make people believe. On the contrary, the statements express the true policy and approach of the Israelis: that is to say, the enemy entity has no intention whatsoever of working to establish a just peace. All the entity wants is to legitimize and perpetuate the occupation and make it a fait accompli—even if it has to launch new aggression against the Arab nation to do it.

AL-BA'TH goes on to say: This Zionist extremism must serve as a catalyst forcing all Arabs to reconsider their positions urgently. Foremost among the issues that must be reconsidered are the irresponsible stands taken by some Arab parties who have apparently forgotten their nationalist and pan-Arab duty, thereby offering the enemy concessions it would never have obtained even during previous bad times for Arabs.

Concluding its editorial, AL-BA'TH says: We firmly believe that the time has come for Arabs to be the leaders and decisionmakers in the region and not to allow others to dictate events.

Afghanistan

Mujahidin Plan 'Final Assault' on Jalalabad

BK0503042589 Hong Kong AFP in English 0405 GMT 5 Mar 89

[By Mike Gonzalez]

[Text] Jalalabad Region, Afghanistan, March 5 (AFP)—Rebels laying siege to Jalalabad are poised for a final assault on the important garrison city and say their orders could come at any moment.

At one location, rebels peer through binoculars at government troops moving on the other side of a desert some four kilometers (2.5 miles) wide, exchanging fire with them sporadically.

Neither side can cross the open no-man's-land during the day for fear of being hit, but the rebels say they send raids at night.

"That's just practice. We have to know what to do when the orders (to attack Jalalabad) finally come," said the local commander, Haji Matin, who belongs to the Hezb-e Eslami group led by Gulbuddin Hikmatyar.

Pictures of Mr. Hikmatyar, considered the most radical Muslim fundamentalist in the seven-party Pakistan-based resistance alliance, were posted all over the camps, although mujahidin from other groups were in the area as well.

Rebels huddled at the last forward base in the area—consisting of two tents under a bridge Mr. Matin estimates is some 15 kilometers (10 miles) east of the center of Jalalabad—say they are outgunned by government forces but feel confident their jihad, or holy war, will succeed.

Mr. Matin said area field commanders would be holding an assembly or shura soon, perhaps as early as Monday, to plan the attack on Jalalabad. God willing," he said, they would decide to assault the city soon.

The government has taken measures to defend Jalalabad, installing BM-41 multi-barrel rocket launchers on hills overlooking rebel positions some four kilometers (2.5 miles) north of the bridge.

Government planes also bombard the area around the bridge and other forward bases at night. The rebels claim that the planes must take off from Kabul because the Jalalabad airport is no longer safe for the government forces.

Two missiles fired from the hills fell two or three kilometers (one or two miles) south of the bridge during a recent visit to the area by AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE. The rebels pointed out craters throughout the area caused by other heavy artillery fired from across the desert.

One crater about 40 meters (130 feet) in diameter was caused by a Scud missile fired from Kabul, they said. A much smaller one with charred substances around the edges was proof that a napalm bomb had fallen there, they added.

The resistance has accused the Kabul government of using both napalm and chemical weapons, charges the Kabul government has repeatedly denied.

But a rebel leader here, Shah Wali, referred to a "teargas" that "made eyes turn red and could blind you, cause itching and sores."

The rebels here, armed with Kalashnikov rifles and some shoulder-fired rocket launchers, added they were not afraid of the government's superior firepower. They said Jalalabad must be their first major conquest, even though it can be reached from Kabul with the Soviet-supplied Scuds.

"Even now they are using Scud missiles. ... We don't fear it. We don't care," said a rebel. "They have used all the sophisticated weapons in their armory, not only the Scuds. So we're not scared."

The orders to attack the city will come from field commanders and political leaders in Peshawar, Pakistan, they said. "This is a major operation, and everyone has to be in agreement," said Mr. Wali, adding that leaders of all seven rebel groups would make the decision jointly.

Observers say the rebels must take a large city to show strength following the completion of the Soviet withdrawal on February 15. Khowst in the south and Qandahar in the east have also been mentioned as possible sites for the first post-withdrawal showdown between the mujahidin and the government.

But rebels here said the resistance leadership should wait no longer for an attack on Jalalabad, some dismissing fears of killing people inside the city.

"We have sent messages, letters, and we have said that all the Muslims should come out, surrender or join us," said one. "All those who supported have already joined us. If they don't, it means that they are supporting the regime. They should have come out by now."

One rebel, expressing some frustration with the wait, said once the fighters receive the order it will take "about a week" to take Jalalabad.

The rebels also discarded hopes for an internal uprising in Jalalabad to accompany the external assault on the city.

"These hopes have not been fulfilled. There has been no internal uprising until now. It should have happened by now. Why are (Jalalabad residents) taking so long?"

asked a rebel. "Since these hopes have not been fulfilled, we believe that all the people living in Jalalabad are supporters of the Kabul regime."

"The Koran is very clear, Islam is very clear. ... Whatever treatment we mete out to the infidels, the same treatment should be meted out to their supporters," a rebel said.

Mr. Wali added, however, that "people do want to come out of the city to join us, but they are stopped" by government forces.

"We don't want bloodshed, we will wait until the very end," said Mr. Wali. "But we have information from inside the city that the regime is holding these people hostage."

"In this province of Nangarhar we have now only to capture the capital, Jalalabad, ... And then combine all the forces from all the other provinces for the assault on Kabul" 120 kilometers (75 miles) to the west, Mr. Wali said.

The government created in Pakistan last month should be installed in Jalalabad, they said. "We must control Jalalabad. It's so important," said one.

Islamabad Reports Mujahidin Armed Operations

50 Casualties in Khowst

BK0403143689 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1400 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] In Afghanistan, the mujahidin reportedly captured a huge amount of military supplies which were airlifted on Monday [27 February] for the besieged troops of Khowst garrison. AGENCY AFGHAN PRESS reported that a Kabul regime transport aircraft dropped 10 parachutes containing supplies for the Kabul forces near Khowst airport. But instead of landing at the destined area, the parachutes landed at mujahidin positions. According to reports, the mujahidin attacked Khowst garrison with rockets and mortars, killing and wounding 50 Kabul troops.

Jalalabad Positions Fortified

BK0503024289 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] The communications minister of the interim government of Afghanistan, Eng Ahmad Shah, said even now about 200 Afghan families cross into Pakistan every day due to the extremely bad situation in Afghanistan and the bombings. Addressing a press conference in Quetta last night, he said the Afghan mujahidin have fortified their positions around Jalalabad. They are refraining from attacking the city to prevent a bloodbath. They are trying to force the Kabul regime troops to surrender.

Clashes on 'Outskirts' of Kabul

BK0503160289 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] The Kabul administration's forces and the mujahidin have exchanged shelling on the outskirts of Kabul. The Kabul administration's forces launched shelling on the mountains by the side of the highway leading to the Soviet border. The mujahidin fired missiles in retaliation.

A convoy carrying food and fuel from the Soviet Union arrived in Kabul yesterday. This is the first convoy to reach the city since the Soviet troop withdrawal last month.

Meanwhile, the mujahidin, who have been besieging Jalalabad, have completed all arrangements for [words indistinct] on the city and have said that orders for the attacks can come at any moment from the mujahidin high command.

Plane Shot Down Over Shindand

BK0603082589 Islamabad Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Reports from Afghanistan speak of fighting between Kabul regime troops and the mujahidin in various parts of the country. Reports say in Baghlan 12 Kabul regime troops surrendered to the mujahidin after clashes. In Nangarhar, 8 Kabul regime soldiers were killed and 16 wounded.

An officer and 32 soldiers defected and joined the mujahidin in Paktia. The mujahidin also shot down one aircraft and captured its pilot in an operation in Shindand.

Kabul Reports Armed Forces Combat Operations

Security Situation 3-4 Mar

LD0403174889 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] An Armed Forces spokesman reported that the security situation is normal in most provinces of the country and the Armed Forces are in control of the situation. Only in those regions where the extremists were disrupting the situation by plundering the people's property have retaliatory combat operations been carried out. As a result, a number of plunderers were killed and a number of their trenches, weapons, and ammunition were destroyed due to the crushing blows inflicted on them by the Armed Forces.

The BAKHTAR military section reports the following on the military situation in the past 24 hours:

Parvan: Elements who were disrupting security by plundering people's property faced crushing blows inflicted by the Armed Forces. As a result of this operation against extremist regions in Jabal os Saraj district centers, 15 extremists were killed and 25 were injured. One mortar and one rocket were destroyed. The Salang highway is

open to traffic and convoys transporting foodstuffs and other essential commodities. People are traveling along this highway from the Hayratan border and other regions in the north of the country to Kabul.

Qandahar: As a result of Armed Forces units and subunits' retaliatory actions in Qandahar Province, 11 extremists were killed, 7 were injured and 32 enemy trenches, 3 DShK's, and 1 rocket launcher were destroyed.

During this operation one member of the Armed Forces was martyred and two were injured.

Helmand: As a result of Armed Forces mopping-up operations in the environs of Grishk district, three terrorists were killed and five were injured. A large quantity of weapons and ammunition, including one tractor and one vehicle, were seized by the security forces.

According to another report, 567 of the country's youths reported voluntarily to the military commissariats in the capital and provinces. After registering their names they were inducted into units of the Armed Forces.

Military Clashes 4-5 Mar

LD0503160189 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1430 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Our Armed Forces have carried out a series of combat operations in various regions of the country in response to terrorist activities and attacks by extremists. In fulfilling their patriotic duty the Armed Forces have ensured a peaceful life for their compatriots.

A reliable source in the Armed Forces gave BAKHTAR the following information on the military situation over the last 24 hours:

Nangarhar: Armed Forces combat operations were carried out in Nangarhar Province along the Kabul-Nangarhar highway in response to Pakistani-supported extremists attacks. As a result, 18 criminal extremists were killed and 27 were injured. Two rockets, a mortar, three recoilless guns, and seven strongholds were destroyed. During these operations, 52 anti-vehicle mines and 14 anti-personnel mines belonging to these terrorsts were defused and 15 anti-vehicle mines were seized by the heroic Armed Forces. Four members of the Armed Forces were injured in these operations.

Qandahar: As a result of Armed Forces mopping-up operations in the Qandahar city area, 12 armed criminals were killed and 23 were injured. Three rockets, one recoilless gun, 5 DShK's, 11 mortars, and an arms depot belonging to the extremists were destroyed. Also, 15 surface-to-surface missiles, 3 boxes of recoilless guns, 11 boxes of Kalashnikov ammunition and 2 boxes of DshK shells belonging to the warmongers were seized by our Armed Forces.

Herat: As a result of crushing blows by the artillery forces in Enjil District, Herat Province, eight terrorists were killed and four were injured. Clashes between the Armed Forces and extremists in the Koshk-e Kohneh District, resulted in 10 terrorists killed and a large quantity of arms and ammunition seized by the Armed Forces.

Konduz: As a result of successful Armed Forces operations along the Konduz-Shir Khan highway, four warmongers were killed, two were injured, and three were arrested with their weapons.

A number of armed opposition members have recognized the aims of the national reconciliation policy. They have left the ranks of the armed extremist opposition and joined the Armed Forces in areas of Konduz Province.

Faryab: An armed group of 14 men, led by (Esa), who were engaged in armed activities for some time in Qeysar District, ceased their armed activities and joined the ranks of the defenders of the homeland and people.

Farah: As a result of Armed Fores mopping-up operations in areas of Farah Province, 26 warmongers were killed and 20 were injured. During these operations, 15 boxes of DShK's and Kalashnikov shells were seized by the Armed Forces. Two rockets and a mortar were destroyed.

According to another report, in the last 24 hours, 576 youths have reported to the commissariats in the capital and provinces. After registering their names, they were sent to the relevant units and companies.

Kabul-Hayratan Road Reopened

LD0503174789 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] The Kabul-Hayratan highway, which was closed to traffic for the last few days as a result of heavy snow, was cleaned and reopened thanks to the efforts of the Department of Roads and Field Construction employees and Armed Forces personnel.

The BIA military section reports that despite the recent statement by the Republic of Afghanistan and the meeting between esteemed Afghan President Najibullah and elders and influencial figures of Kabul Province regarding security on the Salang highway, a number of criminal extremists blocked the route used for the delivery of primary goods needed by the people. They intended to steal the bread from our compatriots' table cloths. However, despite their obstacles and vain efforts, yesterday and today a total of 556 transportation vehicles from the state and private sectors arrived in Kabul with more than 6,000 tons of fuel, flour, sugar, ghee, and other primary goods needed by the people.

Of those supply convoys heading toward Kabul from Parvan, 13 tankers and 2 vehicles loaded with wheat were burned in the region of (Nopula) between Kariz-e Mir and Qarah Bagh districts as a result of savage attacks and a fire set by a number of extremists.

The country's brave Armed Forces resorted to a timely action and inflicted crushing and deadly blows on the plunderers and thieves of our childrens' bread. They have ensured the security of the highways and the supply convoys.

The transportation of primary goods needed by the people is continuing. Afghan television has filmed and broadcast the transportation of goods and the attack by the extremists on convoys of foodstuffs.

Najibullah Interviewed on Security Situation

LD0403200589 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 4 Mar 89

["Excerpts" of interview with President Najibullah by unidentified correspondent of "independent publication" AKHBAR-E HAFTA (THE WEEKLY NEWS); date and place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] Esteemed President, thank you on behalf of AKHBAR-E HAFTA for agreeing to our request for an interview, despite all your important and serious responsibilities. Please allow me to ask my first question. As all our compatriots know, a state of emergency was declared in the country a few days ago. Does this mean that the [word indistinct] of the national reconciliation policy in the country has ended, and the ground is being prepared for a military situation?

[Najibullah] The national reconciliation policy is a continuous and long-term policy, while the state of emergency is of a temporary and short-lived nature. It was formed as a result of threats from abroad. The declaration of the state of emergency does not in any way mean the violation or rejection of the national reconciliation policy. It is a preventive measure to halt the destruction and sabotage, protect the national reconciliation policy, and ensure peace and tranquillity.

Of course, the appointment of a few party comrades in the cabinet does not mean that concessions or opportunities to work have been taken from nonparty people. On the contrary, I can say that nonparty people, our political allies, and eminent social and political personalities take an active part both at the level of the Supreme Council for the Defense of the Homeland, at the vice-presidential level, and among officials in the Council of Ministers, in the cabinet itself, and in the system of our political and administrative power.

I think that, at these difficult and historic moments, to give a number of ministerial posts to party comrades is counted not as a concession but as a greater responsibility that has been entrusted to them. However, we can say clearly that the PDPA will not deviate from sharing power with all political forces, whether at an organizational or individual level.

This means, finally, that the state of emergency is a temporary measure and will pass. Of course, the nature of our future measures will be connected with developments in the situation. If the armed opposition does not refrain from their destructive and warmongering activities, and Pakistan does not [word indistinct] armed interference and aggression, we will use whatever means we have to protect the national security of Afghanistan.

[Correspondent] Thank you, esteemed President. I want to ask if in implementing the national reconciliation policy in past mistakes were not made. Or is the Republic of Afghanistan [words indistinct]?

[Najibullah] We believed, and still believe, that the national reconciliation policy is a logical policy. It was discussed correctly and in a timely way, and it agrees with the interests of the majority of the Afghan people. No policy can be completely without mistakes. There are still some people who do not have an accurate and thorough understanding of the national reconciliation policy. However, the real and true enemies of this policy are those who do not think about the national interests of Afghanistan but discuss the political aims and goals of foreigners and act in light of them.

[Correspondent] Thank you very much. I have another question: Is it really true that Pakistan has plans for a merger with Afghanistan? If so, what measures will the Republic of Afghanistan take?

[Najibullah] The plans or expansionist wishes of Pakistani military circles are not new. In his time, Ziaul Haq said repeatedly that he would soon give prayers of thanks in the Pol-e Kheshti mosque [Kabul main communal mosque]. Today, our opposition, unfortunately calls our Pol-e Kheshti mosque the mosque of the martyr Ziaul Haq. If they achieve their sinister aims, they intend to rename our historic and ancient Kabul, the cradle of freedom, honor and heritage of our country, as Zia Abad.

It is no accident that a shura, made up of diverse persons, organizations, and groups, is being hastily put together by the Pakistani military intelligence agency, in a rushed and irresponsible manner, to form a so-called Pakistani-Afghan government and to impose it on the Afghan people. Without a doubt, by forming this government the Pakistani military are also interested in implementing their expansionist plans, especially recently, when Pakistan's regular military forces have come near to the western, southwestern, and southern borders of Afghanistan. [passage indistinct]

Najibullah Asks UN To Airlift Supplies From USSR
BK0503065089 Hong Kong AFP in English 0641 GMT 5 Mar 89

[By Kate Webb]

[Text] Kabul, March 5 (AFP)—Afghan President Najibullah has suggested that the United Nations help relieve food and gasoline shortages in Kabul by airlifting supplies piled up on the Soviet border.

Mr. Najibullah said in a televised interview here Saturday night that tons of food and fuel had piled up in Hayratan, the border town north of Kabul.

"The U.N. can send these as part of the Soviet Union's contribution to the United Nations' assistance programme to Afghanistan," he said.

"The state is ready to cooperate with the United Nations in distribution of this aid," Mr. Najibullah said in the televised interview with representatives of the Afghan publication, WEEKLY NEWS.

The United Nations managed to get one plane load of flour to Kabul last month as part of a relief effort which has since been bogged down by airline refusals to fly the hazardous route and other tangles.

Mr. Najibullah's statement came as food and fuel stocks in Kabul plunged to dangerously low levels because of bad winter weather and a blockade imposed by Muslim resistance guerrillas fighting to topple his Soviet-backed government.

Fuel prices have risen sharply, leaving many citizens without heating in a bitter winter. The capital's streets have become almost devoid of private cars, while taxi drivers tried to find petrol on the black market.

However, temporary relief has been promised by a convoy of some 1,000 vehicles carrying gasoline and flour which rolled into Kabul from the Soviet Union Saturday after being trapped by snow and avalanches for a total of 32 days enroute.

Residents said they had been promised ration cards for food and fuel and that they were still waiting for distribution of supplies to begin.

Mr. Najibullah also referred in the television interview to a state of emergency he declared after the Soviet Union completed its troop withdrawal from Afghanistan on February 15.

Mr. Najibullah said the state of emergency was a temporary measure and in no way deviated from the national reconciliation policy of his People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) government.

Under the policy, the PDPA has offered to share power with mujahidin resistance rebels. But the Pakistan- and Iran-based resistance have turned it down and insist that the PDPA first step down.

"The PDPA will not deviate from its commitment to division of power and participation of other forces," Mr. Najibullah said, but ruled out the possibility of him stepping down as "impractical."

"The opposition (resistance) cannot agree on a shura, so how can they administer the country," Mr. Najibullah said. "The PDPA cannot permit the country to be drowned in the abyss of a civil war."

The reference was to the shura, or traditional council meeting, held in Pakistan recently where the mujahidin had trouble setting up a provisional government with differences surfacing between rival factions.

Mr. Najibullah spent much of the interview blaming "military and intelligence circles" in Pakistan for Afghanistan's present problems, saying they did not want an "independent, stable and powerful Afghanistan."

The state of emergency, he said, had been made "inevitable" because of a foreign threat—which observers saw as a reference to a perceived threat from Pakistan, which the Kabul government has previously accused of massing troops on the border.

Najibullah Grants Interview to Pakistani Reporter
BK0503034589 Hong Kong AFP in English 0309 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Kabul, March 4 (AFP)—Afghan President Najibullah Saturday granted his first interview to a Pakistani journalist since the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan was completed two weeks ago.

The journalist, Anvar Iqbal, of the independent Islamabad-based newspaper THE MUSLIM, said that Dr. Najibullah had spoken to him for one hour and had been "very warm."

Mr. Iqbal said the president had given him "many messages for the American and Pakistani people."

He also spoke well of newly elected Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and displayed an understanding of the problems facing her.

Ms. Bhutto is generally considered less hardline on the Afghanistan issue than her predecessor Mohammed Ziaul Haq, who died in a plane crash last year. She has actively urged the mujahidin opposing Mr. Najibullah's government to try to solve the Afghan problem peacefully.

An alliance of seven mujahidin groups is based in Peshawar in Pakistan and along with the United States has one of their main arms suppliers.

Pakistani 4 Mar Airspace 'Violation' Protested
LD0403171789 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto
1530 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Information Department reported the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan's strong protest today concerning a Pakistani Air Force jet's violation of Afghan airspace. The acting director of the First Political Department summoned the Pakistani charge d'affaires in Kabul to the Foreign Ministry this afternoon.

The aircraft entered Afghan airspace at 1230 on 4 March at a speed of 720 km per hour from the direction of Spin Tak region, Spin Buldak district, and after a reconnaissance flight returned to Pakistani territory.

Tanay Condenms Pakistan's 'Annexation' Plans
LD0403224889 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto
1530 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Excerpts] A large meeting of the Kabul garrison and units of Chief of General Staff (?Command) officers was held today in the conference hall of the Ministry of Defense to condemn the so-called shura and government of the opposition in Pakistan and the irresponsible statement of Pakistani President Ghulam Ishaq Khan on Pakistan's annexation of Afghanistan in the guise of a confederation.

The BAKHTAR military section reports that Major General Zabiullah Ziarmal, head of the Armed Forces Political Affairs Department, made a short speech on the subject. Then Defense Minister Lieutenant General Shahnawaz Tanay, delivered a comprehensive speech on the Pakistani president's irresponsible statement about Afghanistan's annexation in the guise of a confederation, the shameless interference of Pakistan in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, and the convening of the so-called shura of Afghanistan, and the Afghan interim government in Pakistan.

He laid out the responsibilities of the participants in the meeting for enhancing combat capability, consolidating discipline, enhancing the level of political and combat training, and better defending independence and territorial integrity. He pointed out their responsibilities in ensuring peace and security and fully implementing the national reconciliation policy. [passage omitted]

A resolution was passed at the end of the meeting. It assures esteemed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan and general secretary of the PDPA, that the Armed Forces are ready to fight to the death to defend their country and to safeguard the independence and territorial integrity of the country, and to destroy the conspiracies of the enemies of the people and the country.

Wakil Briefs Gandhi, Delivers Najibullah Message
LD0503084089 Kabul BAKHTAR in English
0457 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Kabul, March 4, BAKHTAR—Message of President Najibullah was submitted to Rajiv Gandhi, prime minister of the Republic of India on Friday [3 March] by 'Abdul Wakil, minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan during his meeting with R. Gandhi.

During the meeting, the Afghan foreign minister briefed R. Gandhi of the recent changes and developments as well as military-political situation in the Republic of Afghanistan especially after the complete withdrawal of the Soviet limited military contingent from Afghanistan. 'Abdul Wakil regarded the efforts of India as an influential non-aligned country in finding a political solution for settlement of the Afghan issue very significant. Reciprocally, R. Gandhi expressing gratitude to President Najibullah's message stated full readiness of India for economic as well as humanitarian aids to Afghanistan.

During the said meeting both sides discussed a number of issues pertaining to mutual interests as well as the regional and international situation.

Likewise, 'Abdul Wakil had a separate meeting with the minister of external affairs of India, Narasimha Rao, on Friday. During the meeting 'Abdul Wakil stressed that maintenance of an urgent peace in Afghanistan will be for the benefits of all neighbouring countries including India and added that in regard to the present situation the only way for a peaceful settlement of the situation around Afghanistan is the way of talks and dialogue among the parties involved in the conflict.

He said further that non-aligned countries and the Republic of India can play a major role in peaceful solution of the Afghan issue. Pointing to the repeated violation of the Geneva accords by Pakistan and intensification of its interferences in the internal affairs of Afghanistan especially after withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan and the useless endeavors of the Afghan oposition and their patrons for formation of councils and the [words indistinct] Government.

The Afghan foreign minister added that the Afghan side counts on the moral support of India.

Reciprocally, Narasimha Rao stated that the Republic of Afghanistan can fully count on the moral support of India at any time. The Indian minister for external affairs, Rao, promised that India will spare no efforts for rendering economic and humanitarian aids to Afghanistan through mutual cooperation and the United Nations.

Both expressed satisfaction over the friendly relations between the two countries and further strengthening of cooperation in the fields of economy, culture and politics.

N. Singh state minister for foreign affairs of that country, and 'Abdul Samad Azhar, ambassador of Afghanistan in India, were also present during the meeting.

According to another report on the same day 'Abdul Wakil had a separate meeting with N. Singh, state minister for foreign affairs of the Republic of India. During the meeting both sides discussed matters of mutual interests.

Supply Convoy Reaches Kabul Via Salang Route

LD0403141189 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1330 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] A large convoy of 235 trucks carrying foodstuffs and petroleum arrived in Kabul today via the Salang highway. This convoy transported a sufficient quantity of flour, wheat, cooking oil, petroleum products, and other basic commodities needed by the Kabul citizens. With the arrival of this convoy the citizens' shortages of foodstuffs and petroleum products will be alleviated, to an extent. Convoys carrying foodstuff and goods along the Salang highway continue toward Kabul.

Convoy Traveled 'Over 1 Month'

BK0403153489 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] On the war front in Afghanistan, mujahidin operations continue in Baghlan, Nangarhar, Paktia, Qandahar, and Oruzgan provinces. The mujahidin killed 15 Kabul regime soldiers, shot down 2 helicopters, and destroyed 1 oil depot.

Meanwhile, a convoy of about 1,300 [figure as heard] trucks carrying foodstuffs, fuel, and other items from the Soviet Union reached Kabul today. The convoy left the Soviet border town of Termez, and traveled for over 1 month before reaching the Afghan capital via the Salang highway.

Media Reports of Takhar Army Defections Denied

LD0303174489 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Text] A BIA correspondent from Takhar Province rejects Western media reports—BBC and Voice of America—on the surrender of Armed Forces units and companies stationed in Takhar Province.

In the last few nights, the Voice of America and BBC have repeatedly reported that 'Abdul Samad, general director of the units and companies of the Revolutionary Toilers Organization of Afghanistan [RTOA] in Takhar Province; Lieutenant Colonel Ghulam Sakhi, commander of one of the units and companies in Takhar Province; and Muhammad Hakim, political head of the units and companies of the RTOA in the province; and a large number of brave soldiers of those units and companies defected to the warmongering extremists. A television reporter conducted an interview with these commanders today. [passage indistinct]

Mojaddedi Calls on Shi'ites To Share Power

LD0303174989 Tehran IRNA in English 1637 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 3, IRNA—The head of the Pakistan-based interim Government of Afghanistan has called on all Afghans for support, including Shi'ite groups which have stayed away from the (?government) in exile.

"A government is now established and we ask the Iran-based Afghan Shi'ites to take part in it", added Sibghatullah Mojaddedi who was addressing a large gathering of Afghan mujahidin and refugees in Peshawar Wednesday.

The eight-part mujahidin alliance based in Iran have boycotted the transitional government, saying they were not fairly represented in a consultative council which picked the members of the government.

Meanwhile, leaders of Afghan mujahidin in Iran are to hold a meeting here Friday and to discuss the present situation of Afghanistan and related developments.

In the meeting, coalition spokesman Muhammad Karim Khalili will brief the audience on the council's plans and positions on the current developments of Afghanistan.

Mojaddedi said he had recently had telephone contacts with Iran-based mujahidin, and expressed hope that he could convince them to paricipate in his government.

On "The Satanic Verses", Mojaddedi said Imam Khomeyni's decree was right, and the Salman Rushdie should be killed because he had insulted Islam. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Khalili Urges 'Flexibility'

LD0303190289 Tehran IRNA in English 1852 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 3, IRNA—Differences between the Afghan mujahidin in Iran and those in Pakistan should not give hope to the enemies of the Afghan nation, a mujahidin leader based in Iran said.

Speaker of the eight-party mujahidin coalition in Iran, Muhammad Karim Khalili added: "Differences between the coalition council and the Pakistan-based mujahidin will eventually be settled and the end of disagreements will lead to the fall of the Soviet-backed Kabul regime."

Khalili was addressing a gathering of Afghan refugees in Tehran Friday.

"Any plan for the future of the country will be incomplete and will fail if it does not take you (refugees) into account", he added.

Khalili's remarks seemed to be a positive reply to the call on Wednesday by the head of the Afghan Government in exile Sibghatullah Mojaddedi on Khalili's colleagues to end their boycott of the Pakistan-based mujahidin interm government.

However Khalili said his efforts for preservation of unity among Afghans would not prevent "taking stands" on the decisions of the consultative council, or shura, which recently confirmed members of the government.

He also urged the Pakistan based mujahidin to show flexibility.

The disagreements between the council and the seven-party alliance in Pakistan were "not like the differences between two beliefs or two nations."

"The disagreements", he said, "center on the transitional government and the future of the country."

Khalili said contacts between with the seven-party alliance had not been cut, and that the Iran-based coalition was ready to resume talks with the other faction "whenever it showed flexibility and realism."

No Role Seen for Zahir Shah

LD0303205589 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Text] The gathering of the eight-party mujahidin coalition council is the title of our first news report.

Mr Muhammad Karim Khalili, spokesman for the council of Afghan Islamic coalition, spoke this afternoon at Tehran's Imam Khomeyni Mosque in the bazaar to a gathering of Afghan refugees. He stressed that the difference between the coalition and the brothers of the seven-party union must never give hope to the enemies of the Afghan nation.

Speaking on the same theme he added: Our difference with the brothers who are resident in Pakistan will eventually be solved. And when we solve our differences the criminal regime which depends on the Soviet Union will be eliminated.

IRNA reports that on the present situation in Afghanistan, Mr Khalili elaborated on the position of the struggling forces and the problems of Afghanistan's future. Addressing the Afghan migrants he said: Any project and plan for the future of Afghanistan will be inadequate if you are not considered. They would not be successful.

In his remarks Mr Khalili said: Our efforts to bring about unity and safeguard the national interests would not prevent us from taking positions on decisions by the consultative council and the provisional government, which the seven-party coalition brothers have declared.

On the same topic he said: Our disagreement with the brothers in the seven-party coalition is not one of differences between two faiths or between different nationalities. Rather, our dialogue with them belongs to [matters] related to the consultative council, the provisional government, and objectives and programs related to the future of Afghanistan.

The spokesman of the eight-party coalition council of Afghan mujahidin referred to the agreement between the coalition council and Mr Mojaddedi, and said: After our agreement with Mr Mojaddedi to prepare the council and draft the rules and regulations for the joint council, we went to Pakistan. But there the said agreement was abrogated. They claimed it was a private agreement. He added that as long as the provisional government does not include representatives of all faiths and ethnic groups in Afghanistan, it cannot be representative of the Afghan nation.

He continued: If the seven-party alliance brothers fail to show flexibility toward tangible realities, then we and other world forces are ready to present a comprehensive project for the future of Afghanistan—a project which embraces all Islamic objectives, faiths, and ethnic groups.

According to the same report, at the end of his remarks and in reply to a question on the role of Zahir Shah in the future of Afghanistan, Mr Khalili said: We have repeatedly said that those who have had no part in directing the interests of the Afghan nation during 10 years of war cannot participate in the future of our country.

He added: The future of Afghanistan will be determined by the struggling forces. Therefore, without the agreement of the struggling forces we deem no part for Zahir Shah.

In conclusion, Mr Khalili said: Our contact with the seven-party brothers has not been cut off. When our brothers in Pakistan show a sense of reality and flexibility we are ready to renew our dialogue with them.

Bangladesh

AFP: Shots Fired at Anti-Rushdie Demonstrators

BK0303130089 Hong Kong AFP in English 1226 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Text] Dhaka, March 3 (AFP)—Police fired warning shots and used teargas and batons Friday to prevent militant Moslems demanding execution of the author of "The Satanic Verses" from attacking the British Council library here.

Nearly 150 people including a dozen police officers were injured when several hundred police moved to deter about 15,000 protesters from breaking through a police cordon around the library on the downtown Dhaka University campus, a witness reported.

The protesters, including some Moslem women wearing traditional dress, had earlier held a brief rally outside the national Baitul Mukarram Mosque and began marching toward the library, demanding execution of the book's Indian-born British author, Salman Rushdie.

Moslems around the world have expressed outrage at Mr Rushdie's novel, which they say blasphemes Islam, and have called for the book to be banned.

Guarded by police on lorries, the protesters, belonging to an organisation called the Movement for Islamic Constitution, covered some two kilometres before being halted by police some 150 yards from the library.

As the protesters tried repeatedly to break through the cordon using stones and sticks, police used batons and teargas cannisters and finally warning shots to disperse them.

Organisers earlier had said they wanted to demonstrate in front of the British Council library, where armed police were deployed after an unannounced protest march Wednesday by a group of students left some windows and parked cars damaged. During the protest rally and marches, the organisers burnt two effigies of Mr Rushdie.

Organisers said more than 100 supporters were injured in repeated police actions and about a dozen were arrested on the spot. Among the injured was Moulana Ishaq, a provincial minister before 1971.

Witnesses said that before dispersing, protesters attacked and badly damaged a three-wheeled vehicle carrying some plainclothes police officers, whom they roughed up before police intervened again, the witnesses said.

Predominantly Moslem Bangladesh, which made Islam the state religion last year, has banned "The Satanic Verses."

Deputy Prime Minister Abdul Matin, during a debate in parliament, had demanded maximum punishment for Mr Rushdie but added that it should be "subject to lawfully held trial."

Observers here noted that Friday's anti-Rushdie protest was the first major incident in Bangladesh over the controversy since it erupted last month. Earlier protest marches by various Moslem groups in Dhaka and other towns were mostly peaceful.

The opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party of Begum Khaleda Zia, in a statement carried by newspapers here Friday, said Mr Rushdie was a stooge for anti-Islamic forces and demanded that he be tried under Islamic laws. The right-wing Jamaat-e-Islami Party had earlier asked for his execution.

Opposition Leaders Join Condemnation of Rushdie
BK0503091789 Hong Kong AFP in English 0838 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Excerpts] Dhaka, March 5 (AFP) - Bangladeshi opposition leaders have joined in condemnations here of British author Salman Rushie's controversial novel "The Satanic Verses."

Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina Wajed, who heads former ruling party Awami League, denounced the British writer, saying "as a Muslim I am also agitated" by the book's blasphemous remarks on the holy prophet and Islam.

Ms. Hasina, daughter of assassinated Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, said Sunday in her first public statement on the issue, that a responsible author should avoid writing anything on religion which could offend believers.

Under the three-and-a-half-year Awami League rule until the bloody 1975 coup, Bangladesh, founded from the former East Pakistan, was a secular republic. [passage omitted]

Retired Colonel Abdur Rashid, a leader of the 1975 coup that brought down the league regime of Sheikh Mujib, supported a call by Iranian religious leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini for execution of the Indian-born author.

Mr. Rashid, who heads the newly-formed right-wing Freedom Party, called the conviction "appropriate." [passage omitted]

Moulana Shah Abu Zafar, an influential religious leader in southern Bangladesh, called upon Muslims worldwide to unite in demanding the execution of Mr. Rushdie, newspapers here quoted him as saying. He said defamation of the holy prophet would not be tolerated and urged the West to hand over the condemned author of "The Satanic Verses" to Muslims, the newspapers said.

Another Muslim leader, Moulana Muhammad Fazlul Karim, reportedly told an Islamic congregation outside Dhaka Saturday that execution of Mr. Rushdie under the Islamic laws would be a "fitting punishment." Various right-wing student groups have condemned Mr. Rushdie and paraded on city streets demanding his punishment.

The Bangladesh Human Rights Commission in a statement accused Mr. Rushdie of violating the United Nations human rights charter and said "the charter gives

right to freedom of speech and of writing, but did not give the right to anybody to hurt the sentiments and beliefs of others." [passage omitted]

UN Secretary General Begins Visit to Dhaka 3 Mar
BK0303155289 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Excerpt] The UN secretary general, Javier Perez de Cuellar, was given a warm reception when he arrived in Dhaka tonight on a 4-day official visit to Bangladesh. He was accompanied by his wife Madam (Marsella). President Ershad and Begum Roushan Ershad received them at the Zia International Airport. [passage omitted]

Indian-Trained Shanti Bahini Officer Surrenders
BK0603082789 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 26 Feb 89 pp 1, 10

[Text] Chittagong, Feb 25:—A 25-year-old Shanti Bahini [Peace Force] lieutenant along with his wife formally surrendered to law enforcing agency men at Baghaisari Upazila [Subdistrict] headquarters of Rangamati District on Friday.

According to Rangamati District administration sources, Shanti Bahini Lieutenant Shambhu Tripura accompanied by his wife Rani Dewan Chakma voluntarily came to Baghaisari Upazila headquarters and submitted themselves before the law enforcing agency men. Shambhu, who appeared in Shanti Bahini official olive green uniform, laid down his automatic rifle and eighty-nine rounds of ammunition before declaring allegiance to Bangladesh.

Shambhu Tripura in his confessional statement claimed that cleavage in Shanti Bahini leadership and their faulty policies made him to make-up his mind to surrender. He extended his total support and allegiance to the present government and its peace bids in Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Shambhu Tripura also confided to the police of undergoing 8 years of rigorous training in a secret camp in Tripura State of India before taking up arms "for insurgency acts," inside Bangladesh.

India

Afghan Foreign Minister Meets With Gandhi 3 Mar
BK0303155089 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Text] The visiting Afghan foreign minister, Mr Abdul Wakil, met the prime minister in New Delhi today. He apprised Mr Rajiv Gandhi of the latest situation in his country. A spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry told newsmen that the meeting lasted about 30 minutes. Earlier, Mr Wakil had an hour-long meeting with the external affairs minister, Mr Narasimha Rao. The minister of state [for external affairs], Mr Natwar Singh, was present at both the meetings.

Dalai Lama's Office Condemns Tibet Police Action
BK0603055889 Hong Kong AFP in English 0540 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Excerpts] New Delhi, March 6 (AFP)—The Dalai Lama's Bureau here condemned Chinese police Monday for shooting dead 10 Tibetans during a demonstration in Lhasa.

"We deplore this violence and brutality on part of the Chinese police," a spokesman for the Tibetan spiritual leader said.

(The official NEW CHINA NEWS AGENCY said 11 people were killed and 100 injured Sunday as police opened fire on Tibetan rioters who sacked Chinese shops and homes in Lhasa. [passage omitted])

Spokesman Taywangdi, a member of the Tibetan government in exile, denied Chinese claims that demonstrators had shot at security forces during Sunday's rioting.

"We totally deny the allegation. Tibetan demonstrators have no weapons with them," Mr. Wangdi said, adding the Dalai Lama's Bureau had definite information that police had shot into Tibetans demonstrating peacefully.

He said the demonstrators turned violent and retaliated with stones only after police started shooting. He did not say where the information had come from.

Sunday's demonstration came on the first anniversary of a 16-hour battle between police and young Tibetans in Lhasa in which at least eight people were reported killed.

Mr. Wangdi said last year's violence had flared after Chinese officials tried unsuccessfully to bribe Tibetan monks to take part in a major annual Buddhist festival called Monlam.

Observances of the festival this year were cancelled following the death on January 28 of the Panchen Lama, Tibet's second highest spiritual leader.

"The fact is anti-Chinese sentiments have been building up for a long time among the Tibetans," Mr. Wangdi said, adding that tensions in Lhasa had been fuelled by the death of the Panchen Lama.

He said there was a "great deal of unhappiness" among Tibetans following the death of the Panchen Lama, who Tibetan exile groups here have alleged was killed by Chinese authorities.

A few days before his death on January 28, the Panchen Lama criticised Chinese rule of Tibet.

The Panchen Lama stayed behind in Tibet and did not join the Dalai Lama in exile in India following the failed 1959 uprising. But he still commanded a great deal of respect among Tibetan exiles, who held demonstrated [as received] to mourn his death.

The Dalai Lama, who fled to India along with 100,000 followers, lives in the northern Indian hill town of Dharamsala where his government in exile is based.

Party Leaders Welcome Gandhi Measures for Punjab
BK0303163489 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Excerpts] The prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has announced a package of measures to restore normalcy in Punjab. These include release of Jodhpur [prison] undertrials, removal of restrictions on foreigners' visits to the state and withdrawal of special powers under the National Security Act. Mr Gandhi said normal process of law will continue against those Jodhpur undertrials who face specific charges. Mr Gandhi announced the measures while replying to the debate in both the houses today on the motion of thanks to the president for his address to the joint session of Parliament. [passage omitted]

On the center-state relations, Mr Gandhi said the center has always dealt with all states equally and rendered full assistance in times of need. A new problem has cropped up in Assam and the state government must take care of it. Mr Gandhi assured that the center will give all necessary help to the state in this regard.

The prime minister gave an account of the progress made in the economic, agricultural, and industrial sectors. The basic thrust has been on removal of poverty and unemployment. On devolution of powers to Panchayati Raj [village-level administration] institutions, the prime minister said the government has no intention of bypassing the state governments.

On his visit to China, Mr Gandhi said a joint working group will go into the outstanding issues and will work out mutually acceptable solutions.

About Pakistan, he said the process of normalization has begun.

Referring to Sri Lanka, the prime minister said that the situation in the country is rapidly coming back to normal. The India-Sri Lanka agreement is being implemented faithfully.

Both houses later adopted the motion of thanks to the president for his address to the joint session of Parliament.

Several leaders have welcomed the package of measures announced by the prime minister. The former Punjab chief minister, Mr Surjit Singh Barnala, has said the measures will help in creating better climate, but they should be followed up by a bold political initiative to solve the problem.

The state PCC-I [Pradesh Congress Committee] general secretary, Mr Vinod Sharma, said the measures are in consonance with the wishes of the people.

Welcoming the announcement, the CPI-M [Communist Party of India, Marxist] has said this will help isolate the terrorists and strengthen the people's movement against the secessionists.

Punjab Parties Hail Measures
BK0403162489 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] The central government today issued a notification withdrawing the restrictions on visits by foreigners to Punjab. According to an official spokesman, all foreign regional registration offices and Indian missions abroad have been informed about the measure.

The spokesman also said that a team from the CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] left New Delhi for Jodhpur today for moving the specially designated courts to allow withdrawal of prosecutions against the undertrials. The measures are a sequel to the announcement made by the prime minister in parliament yesterday to restore normalcy in Punjab.

Political parties in Punjab, including the Akali Dal-L [Longowal] and the Unified Akali Dal, and the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak [Sikh Temples Management] Committee [SGPC] have welcomed the package of measures announced by the prime minister. The president of the Unified Akali Dal-T [Talwandi], Mr Jagdev Singh Talwandi, described the package as a good gesture. He urged the government to release all Akali leaders and workers held under detention. The secretary of SGPC, Mr Manjit Singh Calcutta, said in Amritsar that though belated, the announcement was a welcome step. He expressed the hope that the measures will be implemented without any delay. The Akal Takht [highest seat of the Sikh religious authority] head priest, Professor Darshan Singh, said the government's decision is a step in the right direction, but more needs to be done.

Former Akali ministers—Mr Balwant Singh, Mr Prem Singh Chandumaja, and Mr Rajinder Singh Daliwal—hailed the decision to release all the Jodhpur undertrials. They [words indistinct] the government will also release the remaining prisoners.

Punjab Government To Review 'Undertrials' Cases

BK0403085689 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] The Punjab government has set up a high-level committee to review the cases of those Jodhpur undertrials against whom serious cases are pending in the court. Talking to newsmen in Chandigarh today, the state governor, Mr S.S. Ray, said that the committee headed by his adviser, Mr Ribeiro, will have the chief secretary, the home secretary and director general of police as members. He said the release of Jodhpur undertrials will start from next Tuesday.

Mr Ray said that the areas which were placed under the Disturbed Areas Act are being significantly reduced. He said 46 percent of police stations in the states has had no terrorist crimes since January last year. The governor said that another committee has been constituted under the inspector general of intelligence to weekly review the arrests made under the Terrorists and Disruptive Activities Act. He announced that the cases registered against some of the newspapers for objectionable writings have been immediately withdrawn. He said district-level development and grievances redressal committees will be set up in all the districts by next weekend.

Spokesman on Withdrawal of Cases

BK0503150689 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] A spokesman of the Union Home Ministry said in New Delhi today that the government has decided to withdraw cases against all the undertrials held in Jodhpur prison. The team of CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] officials, who had reached Jodhpur, will be moving the specially designated court there to withdraw the prosecutions.

Clarifying, the spokesman said in cases where some of the accused are involved in criminal and other offenses, these will be dealt with under the normal provisions of law.

Reportage on Violence in Punjab, Assam 3-6 Mar

Police Kill One in Kashmir

BK0303145689 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, an indefinite curfew was imposed today in parts of Baramula town following outbreak of violence. An official spokesman told our correspondent that the trouble started when a violent mob tried to set fire to a police post. Police resorted to firing in which two persons received minor injuries.

In another incident, one person was killed in Srinagar city when police opened fire to disperse a violent mob. According to the spokesman, a group of people pelted stones and tried to set a police station on fire after the Friday prayers. When tear gas and lathi [baton] charge failed to disperse the mob, the police had to resort to firing. Most of the shops and business establishments in Srinagar, Baramula, Sopor, Badgam and Anantnag remained closed in response to a bundh [strike] call. Government offices and banks, however, functioned as usual.

6 Sikhs Killed in Punjab

BK0403111689 Hong Kong AFP in English 1101 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] New Delhi, March 4 (AFP) - Security forces shot dead two Sikh militants while Sikh separatists gunned down two civilians in the northern Indian state of Punjab Saturday, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) reported.

Security forces also killed four other Sikh extremists campaigning for a homeland called Khalistan (land of the pure) in two separate gunbattles in the state overnight Friday, the news agency said.

The latest killings were the first since Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi announced in parliament Friday a peace package to end the separatist campaign which has left more than 205 people dead this year.

Suspected Sikh separatists opened fire at a village in Jalandhar District Saturday, killing two people, including a woman, PTI said, citing police.

Also Saturday, security forces shot dead two Sikh militants during a gunbattle in Amritsar District, a known separatist stronghold bordering Pakistan.

No further details were immediately available in either case.

The four militants who died overnight were killed in Faridkot District, PTI said, adding that police had seized "a good quantity of arms and ammunition" from the site of the two gunbattles.

7 'Terrorists' Killed in Punjab

BK0403125289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 4 Mar 89

[Text] In Punjab, 10 persons, including 7 terrorists, have been killed since last night. Security forces gunned down four terrorists in encounters in Faridkot District. Some arms and ammunition were recovered. Two terrorists were killed in intergang rivalry, while two others were shot dead at Jaharsinghwala village in Amritsar District during an encounter.

Terrorists shot dead two persons in Ludhiana District.

Police Fire on Mob, Arrest 10

BK0403162089 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, police resorted to firing in Anantnag town when lathi [baton] charge and teargas failed to disperse a violent mob this afternoon. According to an official spokesman, 10 persons were arrested in Srinagar in connection with the disturbances.

Curfew was relaxed in Baramula town today for 2 hours. No untoward incident has been reported from the town.

'Terrorists' Kill 7 in Punjab

BK0603091389 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] In Punjab, terrorists shot dead seven persons, including a terrorist belonging to a rival gang, in separate incidents last night. In Patiala District, two persons were killed and one injured, when a terrorist opened fire in village Gugapir late night. In Amritsar District, police recovered a bullet-ridden body of a terrorist. In another incident in the district, a teacher was gunned down in Jhabal.

Meanwhile, security forces arrested four persons in Amritsar and Ferozepore Districts. Some arms and ammunition has been recovered.

Incidents Reported in Assam

BK0503160689 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] There are reports of violent incidents from the tribal dominated Kokrajhar and Udalgiri areas of Assam today, as the 199-hour bundh [strike] by the All Bodo Students Union [ABSU] entered the 4th day. The ABSU is demanding a separate state.

Police said miscreants shot dead a person last night in a village in Udalgiri subdivision. A bullet-riddled body was recovered from Kokrajhar District. Attempts by the miscreants to sabotage the rail tracks and blow up a bridge on the national highway was foiled by the police. Government offices and residential houses were burned down at many places. During police raids in trouble-hit areas, a large quantity of arms and ammunition were recovered.

Strike Continues in Assam

BK0603091489 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] In Assam, sporadic incidents of violence have been reported in the Kokrajhar District, Udalgiri subdivision of Darrang District and some areas of Dhubri District as the 199-hour Assam bundh [strike] by the All Bodo Students Union entered the 5th day today.

Normal life continued to be affected in the areas with the shops and business establishments remaining closed. Transport has also been affected.

Reports said the Bodo militants tried to burn an English medium middle school at Bugbari in Dhubri District last night. However, the timely arrival of the police at the scene prevented any damage.

The administration has been moving trucks laden with essential commodities in convoy with police escort. Police and CRPF [Central Reserve Police Force] personnel continued round the clock patrolling on the highways. Armed police pickets have been posted in vulnerable areas.

53 Arrested in Darjeeling

BK0403164089 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Vehicular traffic between Darjeeling and Siliguri remained suspended today following a road blockade put up by GNLF [Gurkha National Liberation Front] supporters at Sonada. They were demanding the release of the rest of GNLF supporters.

DIG [Deputy Inspector General of Police] in Darjeeling, R.K. Hunda, told our Kurseong correspondent that a large number of people today attacked the police outpost at Sonada and damaged a wireless set. Fifty-three arrests were made in this connection and all of them were later released. The situation is now under control.

Meanwhile, over 250 GNLF activists from the Doars region laid down their lethal arms yesterday at the end of a 4-day camp at Mechpara near Siliguri.

PTI quotes the Jalpaiguri District magistrate to say that the clandestine arms included a number of guns and a huge quantity of bomb-making materials. The surrender camps [gathering of activists for surrender], which began on Tuesday last, were held at four places—Samsi, Longapara, Torsa and Mechpara in Doars.

Judge in Bhopal Case Withdraws Over Criticism

BK0403015089 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1600 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Text] In an extraordinary development in the Supreme Court regarding the Bhopal gas victims case, the chief justice, Mr R.S. Pathak, has ordered that the case be heard by another constitution bench. The one which passed orders last month for the $470 million compensation for the Bhopal gas victims will not be associated with the case anymore.

The development follows an unexpected announcement by Mr Justice Venkataramiah that he was withdrawing from the division bench. His decision was in protest against the mounting criticism by the public and the press against the judges who passed the settlement order.

The judge announced his decision immediately after the bench assembled today to consider a batch of writ petitions challenging the validity of the Bhopal Gas Leak Disaster Act.

Explaining why he took the decision, Mr Justice Venkataramiah said he cannot continue on the division bench against the backdrop of what he called the vilification campaign by the press against the judges. He viewed such attacks as worse than an impeachment move. He said he could no longer tolerate the insinuation that something had gone on behind the curtain resulting in a sudden settlement. He said he does not want to have an accusation hanging around him. The justice described the criticism as nothing short of an organized attack on the Supreme Court. He wondered how many of the persons who criticize the order know anything about law and justice.

He clarified that what the Supreme Court did was in the best interest of all the victims. He also thought aloud: What will happen if the situation regarding the compensation reverts to the position before the settlement order on account of the validity of the act being questioned? He said it would imply that lakhs of individual victims will have to fight protracted litigation with the multinational Union Carbide indefinitely. There will be no definite guarantee, either, about the final resolution of the case.

Mr Justice Venkataramiah said the Supreme Court settlement order reflected primarily the concern of the bench for the victims. Referring to the criticism against the attorney general of India, the justice said the law officer is being unnecessarily maligned despite doing a commendable job in assisting the court in the case.

Another member of the constitution bench, Mr Justice Venkatachelliah, said the compensation orders were issued after considering the massive data placed before the bench. The writ petitions challenging the validity of the Bhopal Gas Disaster Act will now be heard on the coming Wednesday [8 March] instead of the 15th of this month.

Bihar Chief Minister, 7 Union Ministers Resign

BK0403161289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] The Bihar chief minister, Mr Bhagwat Jha Azad, and seven union ministers from the state today submitted their resignations to the Congress-I president, Mr Rajiv Gandhi. They have done so to give him a free hand in deciding the leadership issue in Bihar. Several party functionaries have also submitted their resignations.

This was announced by the AICCI [All India Congress Committee-I] treasurer, Mr Sita Ram Kesari, in New Delhi today. He said they have taken the step to clear the (?deck) for a change of leadership in the state and to enable Mr Rajiv Gandhi to decide the matter in any manner he deemed fit.

Mr Kesari said he and Bihar PCCI [Pradesh—State—Congress Committee-I] president, Mr Tariq Anwar, along with two AICCI joint secretaries—Mr Sarfaraj Ahmed and Pagudi Ram—who hailed Bihar, have also sent in their resignations.

The central ministers who handed over their resignation letters to the prime minister are: Mr Bindeshwari Dubey, L.P. Shahi, Mr K.K. Tiwari, Mr Rafiq Alam, Mr D.L. Baitha, Mr Krishna Sahi and Mrs Sumati Oraon.

In a related development a former chief minister and the Rajya Sabha member, Mr Jagannath Mishra, has written a letter to the party high command reiterating his full confidence in the leadership of Mr Rajiv Gandhi. He clarified that his Bihar Vikash Manch [Bihar Development Front] is a voluntary social organization and has nothing to do with politics.

Dr Mishra also stated that he is bound by any decision taken by the party president, Mr Rajiv Gandhi.

Iran

Further Reaction to 'Satanic Verses,' UK Dispute

UK Searching for 'Solution'

LD0303175889 Tehran IRNA in English 1657 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Text] London, Mar. 3, IRNA—The Foreign Office in London has confirmed it has held talks with Sweden's ambassador to Tehran, Harak Glanqvist, but would not say if he was attempting to mediate in the diplomatic dispute between Britain and iran.

Sweden is being assigned the responsibility again for looking after British interests in Tehran during the absence of U.K. diplomats.

A ministry spokesman said Friday he had been holding consultations on the subject.

Britain has less than 4 days remaining from its week-long notice from the Iranian Majlis to alter its stand on the publication of "The Satanic Verses" that is deemed blasphemous to Muslims, or have its diplomatic ties with Tehran cut off.

The Foreign Office has anxiously been searching for a solution and Howe has already accepted having talks with his Soviet counterpart Eduard Shevardnadze in Vienna on Monday, who has offered to mediate in the dispute.

The Swedish Embassy was also not prepared to say more about its Tehran envoy's visit to London other than it concerned its future role of possibly taking over British interests in Tehran.

It said Glanqvist completed his talks with the Foreign Office on Thursday and was immediately returning to Tehran.

Sweden had operated as Britain's protecting power in Iran from 1980 until London-Tehran relations were restored last November.

Recalled Swedish Envoy Mediates

LD0603103189 Tehran IRNA in English 1019 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 6, IRNA—Sweden's ambassador to Tehran has said many Western writers and politicians had now realized that "The Satanic Verses" had seriously insulted the beliefs of Muslims.

Harak Glanqvist made the remark in a meeting with Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Euro-American Affairs Dr Mohammad Javad Larijani Sunday.

Larijani said the issue had affected international understandings and damaged the atmosphere of trust which must exist among nations.

"The only solution to this crisis in the West is respect for Muslims and their belief," he told the Swedish diplomat.

He added that the attitude of the West which claimed to be civilized and progressive had been unprecedented and unfortunate.

The Swedish envoy returned to Tehran Saturday after being recalled for consultations in sympathy with the European Community's decision to withdraw ambassadors from the Islamic republic.

Glanqvist, who is looking after British interests in Tehran, also held talks with Foreign Office officials in London.

UK Meeting Request Rejected

LD0303175289 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Text] An informed source in our country's Foreign Ministry announced on Thursday that the British Foreign Ministry has repeatedly asked for meetings with the Foreign Ministry in order to be informed of the Islamic Consultative Assembly's position toward England, but these requests have been rejected.

According to an IRNA report, he emphasized that Iranian Foreign Ministry officials have emphasized to the British Government that the Islamic Consultative Assembly's position on this matter is completely clear, and the Islamic Republic of Iran under no circumstances will tolerate insults to Islamic sanctities, and that the people and officials have always had a principled sensitivity on this issue.

He concluded that Britain should clarify its position on the demand of the Islamic Consultative Assembly.

UK 'Official Apology' Needed

LD0403212889 Tehran in English to Europe 1930 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] In the wake of the 1-week notice by Iran's Islamic Consultative Assembly to Britain to revise the British official response vis-a-vis the book, "The Satanic Verses" and their hostile (?stance) toward the Islamic world, there has now surfaced some new rifts among that country's political leaders. We now draw the attention of our listeners to a report on the subject.

British Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe, in the course of a televised interview, while announcing the insulting nature of the book, "The Satanic Verses", said he now understands why this book has been criticized. He stressed that his government is not in agreement with the views expressed in the book. Some members of the British House of Commons, too, have called for banning the publication of the book, "The Satanic Verses". This is at the time when Gerald Kaufman, a member of the British House of Commons, has strongly criticized the intimidating atmosphere caused by the British against Muslims; while Professor John Vincent of British University has cautioned British political and legal officials against the consequences arising out of ignoring the Muslims' wrath and rebellion.

Comments made by Sir Geoffrey Howe and other British government officials indicate that they had adequate information of the contents of the book, "The Satanic Verses", and duly anticipated the Muslims' reaction. However, their improper discernment and faulty assessment of the world Muslims' sensitivities led to the fact that there was an unacceptable impudence engaged in creating a current with detrimental consequences and the impact will not prove to be left for the rulers in the British Isles [as heard]. (?The response) of the world Muslim nations to the well-calculated plot of the colonialistic powers, in an attempt to metamorphose Islamic values, demonstrated that the Islamic world, which has united and enjoys solidarity, will never surrender to Zionistic plots. And the British government officials are now placed in such conditions, where they have no alternative but to retrieve from their hostile posture.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Khamene'i, the Tehran Friday Prayers leader, in his Friday prayers sermons said that Britain is [word indistinct] to make a retreat in the face of the firm stand of the Islamic ummah. The London government for quite some time has tried to crush the waves of the Muslims' protests within the British Isles through repeated condemnations and its measures. But this move on the part of the rulers in London from the very outset was due to failure and the ever-increasing nature of the Muslims' (?reaction) is in itself indicative of this reality.

Britain's abortive attempt to draw the Europe Economic Community into the open scene of hostility towards Muslims has gained no result and London is now feeling that it has got into a major trouble. London pressure on the Islamic Republic was one of the objectives pursued by Britain in order to wriggle out of this problem. But the decisive measures taken by the Islamic Consultative Assembly and the support given to the religious decree of Imam Khomeyni by all the world Muslims, have not only led to further revelations of the British policies, but also caused a rift among Britain's political leaders.

Britain, despite a lapse of 2 centuries, has not yet discerned the dimensions of Islam's glory and [world indistinct] its recognition of the quest for Islam in the contemporary world. Britain's Satanic temptations to insult the Muslims have endangered that country's status in the Islamic world and British officials, in order to make amend for this deliberate mistake, have no alternative but to make an official apology to the world of Islam.

Thatcher 'Sympathy' Noted

LD0403095289 Tehran IRNA in English 0726 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] London, March 4, IRNA—Islam along with other great religions are strong enough to withstand such abuses as from "The Satanic Verses," Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher said Friday in her first expression of sympathy with Muslims over the book.

Questioned by reporters in her north London constituency of Finchley, she said she had known in Christianity "people doing things that are deeply offensive."

"We felt it very much and that is what is happening in Islam," Thatcher said in reference to the book that was first allowed to be published in Britain and has become a growing bone of contention between Muslims and with West over its blasphemous nature.

Her comments come as protests in the U.K. became violent Friday with police dogs being used to control an angry Muslim demonstration in the northern town of Halifax that resulted in at least one policeman being injured.

Previous rallies in Britain have passed off peacefully since the book was released last September, in contrast to the scene in India, Pakistan, Turkey and the Philippines, where British missions have become an increasing target.

"I think these great religions are strong enough and deep enough to withstand these kinds of events," Thatcher said, indicating that she was still unprepared to intervene in the growing international storm that has led Iran to move to cut relations with London.

Such religions would "endure long after the names of the people who criticise them," she added.

Her expression of sympathy followed the government's acceptance for the first time that "The Satanic Verses" was "deeply offensive" to Muslims in Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe's public statement on BBC World Service on Thursday.

He maintained that Britain had "respect" for Islam but refused to condemn its contents outright, when maintaining that it represented the right to free expression in Britain.

The comments were seen as a clear attempt to defuse the row between Britain and Iran before next Tuesday's deadline that the Iranian parliament gave to London to alter its attitude or face the consequences of a complete cut in diplomatic ties.

There has been no formal response from Tehran to the British Government's overtures, but President 'Ali Khamene'i said Friday that Britain would have to eventually apologise for its anti-Islamic stance.

UK's Hurd on Rushdie Protection

LD0403115189 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] According to IRNA, British Home Secretary Douglas Hurd announced in an interview with the press that protecting the life of Salman Rushdie, author of "The Satanic Verses," was a step taken by the British police and was not done on the orders of the government. Hurd, who was speaking after Rushdie expressed concern that his police protection might not continue, added: The British police decided independently to afford him protection and the British Government does not interfere in this matter.

According to AP, Salman Rushdie said in a telephone conversation with an opposition MP that he was very concerned about the government's changed stance and that the whole issue may enter a new phase on the basis of remarks made last night by British Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe.

Commentary Urges UK Action

LD0403154789 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1054 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Following the unprecedented move by the Majlis in approving the bill on severing diplomatic ties with Britain, the political circles of that country are positioned against the unity and solidarity of the political authorities and people of Iran who have given priority to the basic sanctities and beliefs of Islam. They express anxiety over the possibility of severing relations as provided for by the Majlis.

According to the bill approved by the Majlis, in the event the British Government within a maximum of 1 week does not officially declare its opposition to the unprincipled positions against the world of Islam and the Islamic Republic, and to the contents of the anti-Islamic book, "The Satanic Verses", the Iranian Foreign Ministry is committed to severing all diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Following the elapse of 5 days since the measure was adopted by Iran, relations between the two countries remain ambiguous.

Alongside the effort of the British Foreign Office to contact the officials of our country and in an effort to prevent the full severence of diplomatic ties with Iran, the authoritative press in Britain recommends that the British Government apologize to the Islamic Republic.

At the same time, in an interview the British prime minister implicitly agreed that the book is offensive. She says that she understands the reason for Muslim reaction to that book.

Geoffrey Howe, the foreign secretary of that country, goes further. He explicitly declares that the book, "The Satanic Verses", is offensive to Islam.

The explicit and clear stances adopted by the British authorities, to the effect that the book is offensive, can be effective in removing the present crisis, provided these stances are followed up by practical measures, despite coming after a long delay.

By accepting the offending nature of the book, the British Government cannot protest against the verdict on the punishment for the writer of the book—a verdict which has been issued according to the Islamic code. Likewise, it cannot choose to remain silent in view of the insult against the sanctities of a large part of the world population, within its own territory, and by a British national.

By accepting the offending nature of the book, "The Satanic Verses", and with regard to freedom of expression which is being discussed, the British Government must now clarify whether freedom of expression and writing can be a licence for defamation and insult.

If the British Government does not recognize freedom of expression to be a licence for defamation, then the legal prosecution of the writer, prevention of reprints and further publication of the book, and confiscation of copies from booksellers are reasonable expectations which can remove many ambiguities. It cannot be accepted that while a book is regarded as offensive and arousing the universal reaction of Muslims against the interests of Britain, it may remain immune to legal prosecution.

Despite recent developments, the British authorities must know that the Salman Rushdie issue and London's stances supporting him will not come to an end merely through the severing of diplomatic ties with Tehran. London's insistence on ignoring the fact that the freedom of writing can be abused will not only destroy the ground for any kind of relation in future but will endanger British interests in other parts of the world.

At present, Muslims in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, the Philippines and the Middle East countries have mobilized against the British Government and this assumes increasing proportions daily.

By limiting the extent of the anger of Muslims to Iran the British Government cannot deny the protests by the Muslims, even in Europe and the United States. Though the British Foreign Office spokesman, without giving any explanation, has said that Britain has asked the Soviet Union to mediate for the normalization of ties with Iran, it seems an explicit reply to the approved Majlis bill by London will eliminate the need for such mediations.

Describing that the book is offensive can be effective and practical only if it is coupled with practical measures and with opposition to unprincipled stances against the world of Islam and the Islamic Republic.

Rafsanjani: Apology Not Enough

LD0403163289 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] On the 4th day of his stay in Esfahan, Majlis Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani praised the students and university employees of the country for their services and sacrifices during the 8-year sacred defense. He was addressing a gathering of students at Esfahan Industrial University this afternoon.

Stressing the importance of finding the reason for the publication of the book, "The Satanic Verses", by the universities, the Majlis speaker said: The conspiracy of arrogance will not end with Britain's apology, nor with the execution of Salman Rushdie and the recall of the book. The problem has a great depth. Their action on the matter should be seriously appraised. It is the duty of the committed clergy, statesmen, and academicians in Islamic countries to deal with it in all seriousness.

He said: It is regrettable that the news and publication sectors in the Western world have become tools in the hands of colonialism in this matter. He added: If they recall this book it would be a great defeat for the West and if they leave it alone it would be a big issue because of the imam's declaration, the sensitivity which has been created, and the people's alertness.

Further Remarks on 'Rift'

LD0403181389 Tehran IRNA in English 1737 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Esfahan, March 4, IRNA—It is incumbent on the Muslim world's committed ulema, politicians and educationists to seriously counter Salman Rushdie's blasphemous novel "The Satanic Verses," stressed the Majlis speaker Saturday.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani terming the Satanic work as "a global arrogance plot" said the rift seems difficult to heal even with the apostate Rushdie's execution, Britain's apology to the Muslim world or withdrawal of all copies from bookshops.

Addressing a group of students at Esfahan Technical University, he termed the issue a "direct confrontation between Western culture and the Islamic shari'a (divine laws)."

On February 14, the leader of the Islamic revolution, Imam Khomeyni sanctioned the Indian-born British author's execution for his blatant insult to Islam and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

In Islam, apostasy carries death penalty, and the imam was merely enacting divine decrees on Rushdie, who is hiding since then. By his own self-confessions, Salman Rushdie, born to Muslim parents in Bombay is an apostate.

In response to the Imam's purely relgious Fatwa, the 12-member European Community (EC)—when goodwill was expected in implementing justice—acted rashly withdrawing its heads of diplomatic missions from Tehran and forcing the Islamic republic with no option but to recall its own ambassadors from the said countries.

Iran has followed it up with an ultimatum to ringleader Britain to risk a break in ties "if the erroneous stand is not revised by March 7."

It is regrettable that the Western mass media and publishers have been used as a tool by colonialism, added Rafsanjani.

The West, he said is on the horns of a dilemma, of its own making. He pointed out that it is a setback for the West to withdraw the blasphemous book, "but if it refuses to do so it faces more serious problems in view of Imam's Fatwa and the rising Muslim sensitivity towards the issue."

With time running out, a baffled Britain requested talks last Thursday, which were rejected by Iran, and since then London has been emitting confused signals, with the home secretary saying that the government was not protecting Rushdie but rather "the police."

Douglas Hurd in his press conference today did not specify whether Scotland Yard operates on its own or as an observer put it "if so the over-adventurous bobbies were simply courting certain trouble."

Rafsanjani arrived on an inspection tour of Esfahan Province last Wednesday, and the next day he witnessed a grand "be that" ["mission"] maneuvres displaying the Islamic Republic's air power.

During his stay, the Majlis speaker has inaugurated several major industrial projects including a rolling mill unit at the Esfahan steel mill and Kuhrang tunnel.

Book 'Colonialist Design'

LD0503142889 Tehran IRNA in English 1401 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 5, IRNA—The Persian daily ETTELA'AT on Sunday reflected on Salman Rushdie's scandalous novel "The Satanic Verses" and termed its publication "a colonialist design by the U.K."

It cited a quotation by the late Iranian scholar, political activist and lay preacher Dr 'Ali Shariati saying that the West pressures Third World governments in the hope that under pressure those governments will eventually turn to Britain [word indistinct].

The daily said the publication of the book in the U.K. was designed to serve the same purpose. It said in dealing with the less mighty nations the U.K. thinks of itself as a mother and of those states as small children. As a child when hit by his mother turns to her for consolation and mercy, so are those states likely to do in relations with the U.S.

The daily said relations between the West and many oppressed countries of the world have been much the same, but commented that the situation is true only of governments which lack support from their peoples. Such governments, it said, stand as an upside-down cone with its apex on the table, always needing the support of a hand, and falling immediately without that support.

In a similar article on the topic which has aroused the Muslim world, the Persian daily KEYHAN said Britain has had second thoughts about its erroneous position in relation with Imam Khomeyni's decree calling for Salman Rushdie's execution. It said since the declaration of the Fatwa by the imam Britons have gradually shifted their tone from open support for the dirty work to acknowledgement of its abuse of Islam. It said faced up with the prospect of a rupture in Iran-U.K. ties, the British instead of encountering the situation directly and in straightforward language are deliberately prevaricating with the idea of throwing the entirety of the burden of decision-making to Iran and hedging themselves behind the veil of diplomatic artifice.

It said the Islamic Republic has the forethought to adopt proper stands and decide on responses to stimuli from without. In the wake of Imam Khomeyni's ruling on the execution of Indian-born British novelist Salman Rushdie for his novel "The Satanic Verses" which abuses Islam and the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the Majlis has served a 7-day ultimatum to London—to end March 7—for severing ties unless that country "revises its erroneous stand" on the blasphemous novel and its writer Salman Rushdie.

In Islam, apostasy carries death penalty, and the imam was merely enacting divine laws against a self-confessed apostate.

Press Review of 'Row' Cited

LD0503125889 Tehran IRNA in English 1120 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 5, IRNA—Commenting on Tehran-London row over "The Satanic Verses", a Tehran daily today said to apologize for a mistake would "not harm anyone's reputation" but rather prove "politeness and possession of human characteristics."

"Britain which preaches ethics, by apologizing to one billion Muslims for supporting Salman Rushdie and his blasphemous novel, can show...that it still respects human principles," JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI said in an editorial today.

The daily believed that the one week ultimatum set by the Majlis for Britain to correct its stance, had confused London whether to apologize to Muslims or opt for a complete break in ties with Iran.

"According to evidences, differences have emerged among British politicians on the issue," the paper said, adding "some of them maintain that it is not in favour of Britain to continue insulting Muslims' sanctities, while others impudently insist on continuation of this policy."

JOMHURI-YE said the reason for such differences of view might be that London was careful not to damage its international prestige. "London would further harm its world prestige if it insists on treading this wrong path," it warned.

Another possible obstacle on the way of an apology by London, the paper said, could be that "some British politicians still dream of Britain being a superpower." This, it added, is the fact that may "hinder the acceptance of realities and dissuade Britain from approaching humanity and asking for pardon from a billion Muslims."

"Britain by taking this step can redress its previous grave mistakes," JOMHURI-YE said.

KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL's editorial headline "Islam Will Be the Victor" comments on the same subject:

"Five months after the blasphemous book, The Satanic Verses, was published in England and five days after the Iranian Majlis passed a bill for severing diplomatic relations with Britain if it did not revise its stand on the issue within a week, voices are being heard from the British Isles indicating that the officials there are understanding what type of book Salman Rushdie has written.

"Iran's stand on the issue remains unalterable. If within the two days left in the one week ultimatum, the British Government does not officially declare its opposition to the unprincipled stand against the world of Islam, the Islamic Republic and the contents of the anti-Islamic book...the Foreign Ministry will break all bilateral ties with Britain.

"As soon as Iran breaks relations with Britain, it has to take as yet undetermined action against all the E.C. countries which demonstrated their support for Britain by recalling their diplomats from Tehran. In the long run it will not be Iran that will be the loser. Iran has already learned to live without depending on the West. She has accumulated precious experience during the past decade towards this end and knows well what to do when the West implements economic sanctions against her."

"Winds of Change From British Side?" is the headline TEHRAN TIMES chose for its editorial today:

"A change seems looming over the British attitude to Salman Rushdie's novel "The Satanic Verses," which has caused enough trouble already.

"It would seem that the British Government has come to its senses after all and wants to hold back the avalanche of Moslem anger against the book authored by one of its citizens, an Indian-born Moslem. But will it be enough?

"Both British Prime Minister Mrs. Thatcher and Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe have over the past day or two expressed the opinion, varying their words only a little bit here and there, that the book has indeed deeply offended Moslem sentiments throughout the world.

"As for the latest political developments in relations between Iran and the British Government, it may still be possible for a change to occur in view of the new attitude which the British leaders are beginning to adopt, even though slowly and late.

"Whether the changes in the air from the British side will be enough or not to satisfy the Iranian Government is yet to be seen."

ABRAR: "Not Much Time Left for London"

Iran's Foreign Ministry on Tuesday is expected to decide whether to sever or maintain ties with London after the one week ultimatum to Britain to officially revise its

"unprincipled" stand against the Muslim world, the Islamic Republic and in favor of Salman Rushdie's blasphemous novel falls due.

Whether the British Government has met the Majlis' conditions or not is yet to be seen.

Iran's Majlis has set two conditions to maintain relations with Britain. In the first place, Britain should officially announce opposition to its earlier stand against the Muslim world and the Islamic Republic.

Secondly, the government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher should clarify its stand on the blasphemous contents of "The Satanic Verses".

The repercussions of the Majlis' decision last Tuesday to sever relations with Britain within a week, at British political and media circles indicate a moderation, if not a change, in London's stand. [sentence as received]

The British Foreign Office in its early reaction to the ultimatum said relations between the two countries depended on Tehran and that Iran's ultimatum to London to condemn Salman Rushdie's "The Satanic Verses" would not bring about any change in Britain's stand.

But one day later, the "GUARDIAN" which has a reputation for its pro-government stance, advised the London government to apologize to Iran in order to prevent a break in bilateral ties and to regret the trouble caused by the book.

Prime Minister Thatcher has said she understands "The Satanic Verses" is offensive to Muslims. Earlier, the foreign secretary had announced that the British Government respects Islam and that it had no connection with the novel.

These remarks by the British officials are aimed at breaking the deadlock the London government itself has created by adopting incorrect stands on relations with Iran and this is far from meeting the conditions set by the Majlis.

Political circles in Tehran maintain that the implementation of the Majlis' conditions is the only way for Britain to break the deadlock in her ties with Tehran.

The withdrawal of all copies of "The Satanic Verses" and banning of its reprinting by the British Government would certainly bring London closer to the implementation of the Iranian conditions.

No Contact With UK Necessary

LD0503213289 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] A Foreign Ministry spokesman has rejected repeated requests by the British Foreign Office for contacts with officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran [IRI]. We announced: Iran has no need for any contacts with British officials. In connection with the claims made by the British mass media to the effect that the IRI has rejected the request of British officials for talks, he said: Despite repeated requests by the British Foreign Office to contact and meet Iranian officials, our country's Foreign Ministry has rejected the request. Basically, there is no need for contacts or meetings.

He pointed out: The stands of the Islamic Majlis and the decision made by its deputies are quite clear. It is up to the British Government to clarify its stands in the face of an insult to Islam and Islamic sanctities. The Foreign Ministry spokesman also stressed that the IRI Government feels dutybound to carry out the decisions of the Islamic Majlis.

In conclusion he stated: In the wake of the recent crisis, our country's Foreign Ministry has not received any letter from Britain's foreign secretary, and the comments made by the British mass media in this connection are denied.

Audience Weeps Over 'Verses'

LD0603090589 Tehran IRNA in English 0849 GMT 6 Mar 89

[By Mohammad Javid]

[Text] Tehran, March 6, IRNA—Imam Khomeyni Monday greeted hundreds of followers many of whom burst into tears when they heard a speech by an official indirectly referring to "The Satanic Verses".

The crowd was received at Jamaran Mosque on Id al-Maba'th, the feast marking Prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon him) appointment as God's last messenger.

He did not make a speech but listened to Habibollah Asgar-Oladi, head of the Imam Khomeyni Charity Organization who greeted the Imam on the occasion which he said was especially significant this year.

Asgar-Oladi, former commerce minister, made no direct reference to Salman Rushdie's novel which has enraged Muslims around the globe for indecently insulting the prophet of Islam and other holy figures, but said the Imam's recent statements had awakened Muslims.

At this point many began to sob.

Before the Imam's entrance slogans were shouted including the condemnation of Rushdie and Britain.

Tehran appears to be set for a complete break in diplomatic ties with London in accordance with a Majlis law which gives Britain time until Tuesday to change its stand on the affair.

There has been no official word whether statements by the British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe admitting that the book was deeply offensive to Muslims have made any impact on the Majlis to reconsider its decision.

British officials have made it clear that they could not stop the book's publication and would not tolerate Imam Khomeyni's Fatwa ordering Rushdie's execution.

There was a sudden outpour of emotion when the mosque's metal balcony door was slid open by an aide and the Imam, followed by his son Ahmad, a grandson, and two other companions walked in from his next door residence.

"You are my spirit, Khomeyni, you are an idol breaker, Khomeyni," the first-waving crowd cried.

The leader of the Islamic repubic looking well and alert, sat in his usual armchair covered by a gray cloth on the corner of the balcony overlooking the audience pressed inside a small area.

A cardboard poster reading "Allah is most high", was pinned on the wall above the chair.

Men sat tightly on the floor covered with a simple felt carpet, while women and their small children occupied the top floor opposite the imam.

As he listened, the imam's eyes locked for few seconds on individuals in the audience that included the disabled of the war in their wheelchairs, Islamic Revolutionary Guards, officials, and foreign guests.

The imam's three-year-looking handsome grandson came to the edge of the balcony near the imam's chair for a close look at the gazing crowd. He did not hear the imam's instruction to sit down and was led instead by Hojj ol-Eslam Khomeyni to sit by his side.

At the end of Asgar-Oladi's five-minute speech, the imam rose, slowly waving his hands up and down to the excited crowd as he moved towards the exit. The grandson copied the grandfather's movement.

Tehran TV Comments on Relations With USSR

NC0303184889 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1520 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Unattributed commentary entitled "Iran-USSR: The Deepening of Relations"—carried within the "Weekly Report" feature]

[Excerpts] The visit to Iran by Eduard Shevardnadze, the Soviet leader's special envoy, and his meeting with Imam Khomeyni, leader of the Islamic revolution, and his detailed discussions with high-ranking officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran was an important event that caused various domestic and international reactions.

Eduard Shevardnadze is the first Soviet foreign minister to visit Iran in the past 70 years as well as the first foreign official to meet with the leader of the Islamic revolution.

According to the assessments of international political analysts, this visit was extremely significant, particularly in light of Shevardnadze's historic meeting with Imam Khomeyni, during which he handed Mikhail Gorbachev's message to the Iranian leader.

Even though Mr Gorbachev did not comment on that part of Imam Khomeyni's message concerning life after death and other supernatural issues, his message is, nevertheless, of special significance in many respects. Mr Gorbachev's message clearly showed that the new leadership of the world's most powerful communist country is trying to free itself from the trap of the reactionary dogma of the materialists and communists and to open the door of its thoughts to realities and truths.

There have been many fluctuations in the development of Iranian-Soviet relations over the past decade. These fluctuations stemmed from major issues, including the imposed war, the problem of Afghanistan, and the Soviet Government's special stances on developments in Iran. The marked changes that started to take place after Gorbachev assumed power in the Soviet Union in 1985 had an important impact on the Soviet Union's new outlook in the spheres of foreign policy and international relations. This change in outlook paved the way for increased exchanges between the two countries.

The Soviet Union's realism exhibited in the withdrawal of its forces from Afghanistan and the termination of Iraq's war against Iran removed the main impediments to the expansion of relations between the two countries. Possibly the most significant event of all however, that opened the door to talks and to a greater understanding between the two countries was the imam's recent historic and unprecedented message to the Soviet leadership. [passage omitted]

The significant point in all of this is that a relatively rational process has begun in the relations between the two neighboring countries. The strong bases upon which their relations rest make possible future ties which will grow in a relative and continuous way and which will exhibit a large degree of realism.

Recent international events have further emphasized the need to deepen these relations in all dimensions. It also appears that serious steps should be taken to tap all of the untapped potentials of the two sides. The protocols signed by the two sides on political cooperation and cultural exchanges can be the basis for a strong movement to lay the foundations for strong relations.

What is definite is that, for different reasons, both Iran and the Soviet Union have special importance in the sphere of international relations. Understanding between the two countries can have a great impact on

regional and world issues. Such an impact has not escaped the attention of world experts. The various reactions of these experts in fact speak of the impact that these relations can have.

Way Paved for Closer Ties

NC0403135089 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 27 Feb 89 p 2

[Editorial from the "Opinion" column: "Gorbachev's Message: A Tactful Maneuver"]

[Text] Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze delivered a message from the USSR's Communist Party Chief Mikhail Gorbachev to Leader of the Islamic Revolution Imam Khomeyni yesterday. The highlights of the message, the first of its kind to be exchanged between the two leaders, were recited to the Imam by Shevardnadze in an hour-and-a-half long meeting. The Imam had sent words to Gorbachev early last January.

In his reply, the Kremlin boss however avoided touching on diametrically opposed ideological points subscribed to by the two nations. Instead, he tactfully chose to point to notions that are mutually acceptable and as such can provide a better footing for Tehran-Moscow ties. This he did not withstanding the fact that in his message to him Imam Khomeyni has criticized Marxism.

The leader of Islamic Revolution for his part reminded Shevardnadze of the purport of his (Imam's) message saying that his intention had been to enlighten the Soviet secretary general about the Hereafter and the metaphysical plane of understanding. The Imam also emphasized the two countries joint cooperation against the conspiracies of the West. The Imam's remarks are indicative of the fact that deterioration in relations between Iran and the West might prove to be long lasting.

It should be noted that on the same day in a double urgency bill some 100 of Majlis deputies called for severance of relations with Britain. A vote on the bill's urgency has been already passed by the Majlis and the bill itself is expected to obtain sufficient votes for final approval. This move taken by the Islamic Republic of Iran may be taken to signal ample warning to other European and Western countries, which displayed a rash diplomacy in diplomatically boycotting Iran.

However to stave off pressures to isolate it on the international level, the Islamic Republic of Iran will have to strengthen ties with the Pacific Ocean nations as well as edge towards the Eastern Bloc countries on political and military grounds. With Gorbachev's balanced and friendly message to the leader of the Islamic Revolution, the grounds for warmer ties appear to have been already paved. Furthermore, President Khamene'i's recent visit to Yugoslavia and Romania is said to have been quite successful.

What also needs to be highlighted in this regard is the fact that Iran is very well cognizant of Soviet Union's influence on the Iraqi policies. It is, therefore, a natural expectation on the part of the Islamic Republic to call on Moscow to use its pull to persuade Iraq to withdraw troops to international borders, a move that would remove the hurdles in the way of the implementation of Resolution 598. This would be a major factor precluding the possibility of the resumption of another conflict in the region.

Shevardnadze Letter Delivered to Velayati

LD0603073389 Tehran IRNA in English 0730 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 6, IRNA—Soviet Ambassador to Tehran Vladimir V. Gudev met with Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati Sunday night [5 March] and delivered a letter from Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, announced the Public Relations Office of the Foreign Ministry.

Shevardnadze in his message thanked the Iranian officials for their warm welcome during his stay in Tehran and especially his meeting with Imam Khomeyni.

Shevardnadze paid a three-day official visit to Iran late last month during which he had the honor to meet with Imam Khomeyni and deliver a message from Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

The Soviet foreign minister has described his visit to Iran as a turning point in Tehran-Moscow relations, said the Foreign Ministry announcement.

Velayati told the Soviet ambassador that in light of mutual efforts bilateral relations will be further strengthened, and called for continuation of talks between the two sides.

PRC Deputy Prime Minister Arrives on 5-Day Visit

LD0303144489 Tehran IRNA in English 1424 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 3, IRNA—Chinese Deputy Prime Minister Tian Jiyun arrived here heading a delegation Friday for a five-day official visit to hold talks on economic cooperation. Jiyun said his visit was aimed at the expansion and strengthening of economic, commercial, and industrial ties.

He told IRNA on arrival that Tehran-Beijing ties, which expanded considerably over recent years, could be boosted further by his negotiations in Tehran. The visit of the Chinese official follows the recent inking of the fourth economic protocol between the two countries.

Confers With Velayati

LD0303183489 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Text] During today's meeting between PRC Vice Premier Tian Jiyun and Foreign Miniser Velayati, which was held at the Foreign Ministry, mutual relations and international issues were discussed. During the meeting, Mr Jiyun announced that PRC Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, will visit Iran in the second half of the year. He stressed the need to expand mutual cooperation. He added that China wants to steadily advance its relations with Iran. It is ready to cooperate with Iran in its reconstruction program. He declared that his government has welcomed Iran's acceptance of Resolution 598. He stressed that peace in the Persian Gulf would be beneficial to all countries.

In reply, Mr Velayati said that Iran attaches special importance to its ties with China. Referring to the Iraqi regime's sabotage of Resolution 598, he recounted the excuses made by the Iraqi regime about implementing the resolution, which have so far prevented the establishment of peace. He added: We hope that the international community, in which China plays an important role, will exert the necessary pressure on Iraq in this matter, so that it retreats from the regions of our Islamic homeland which it has occupied.

Regional issues, including the issue of Cambodia and Afghanistan, were discussed during the meeting.

Discusses Ties With Mirzadeh

LD0403115589 Tehran IRNA in English 1130 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 4, IRNA—Visiting Chinese deputy prime minister Tian Jiyun held talks with his Iranian counterpart Hamid Mirzadeh Saturday on ways of increasing economic and scientist cooperation and expanding political ties. Tian said Beijing was ready to cooperate with Iran in the reconstruction of damaged oil refineries and off-shore oil platforms, manufacture of ships and paper, dredging of waterways and fishing. China attached great importance to its ties with the Islamic Republic, Tian, who arrived Friday for a five-day visit, added.

Mirzadeh welcomed Chinese participation in Iranian economic projects as well as cooperation in building power plants, paper production and ship building. Referring to the Iran-Iraq peace talks, Mirzadeh said Iran was serious in its efforts to gain lasting peace, which would benefit not only the region. He complained about Iraqi obstacles in the peace process. China is a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council.

Holds Talks With Musavi

LD0503073489 Tehran IRNA in English 0705 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 5, IRNA—Iran welcomes expansion of relations with China, said Prime Minister Hoseyn Musavi to the visiting Chinese Deputy Prime Minister Tian Jiyun in a meeting Saturday [4 March]. The Chinese official stressed his country's willingness to promote relations with the Islamic Republic in all domains and conveyed the Chinese prime minister's friendly message to his Iranian counterpart. Musavi said China was now Iran's 6th foreign trade partner while ten years ago it ranked 40th. "We are glad to see such an increase in economic ties," he added.

Jiyun is here since Friday on a five-day official visit at the head of a high-ranking political-economic delegation.

The prime minister referring to Iran-China good relations during the Iraqi-imposed war, asserted that this would certainly have positive effects on enhancement of mutual cooperation. He also expressed the conviction that "with an all-out effort we can better use the mutual existing potentials." Musavi also emphasized Iran's long-term foreign policy after the end of the Iraq-Iran war. "In the light of China's friendly attitude towards the Islamic Republic of Iran during the war, Tehran and Beijing can draw a solid and constant plan for expansion of mutual cooperation," he added.

On Iran-Iraq peace negotiations, Musavi stressed Tehran's desire to achieve a real peace but reminded that Iran would never overlook its "legitimate rights."

On Afghanistan he said Iran was always for unity among all Afghan popular forces and would never accept any foreign intervention in internal affairs of the Islamic state. Iran's stand on the Afghan was supported by the Chinese guest who said "China believes that the removal of differences in Afghanistan will bring about positive results for the people."

Jiyun further praised Iran's acceptance of the U.N. Resolution 598 and expressed hope that Iran-Iraq peace negotiations will soon bear fruit.

Musavi, in the meeting, asked Jiyun to extend an invitation on his behalf to the Chinese prime minister to visit Tehran.

Conveys Message to Khamene'i

LD0503180289 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] This afternoon President Khamene'i received the PRC vice premier who was carrying a written message from the president of his country to Mr Khamene'i.

In this meeting the Chinese vice premier conveyed warm greeting from Deng Xiaoping, chairman of the CPC Central Committee Military Commission; Zhao Ziyang, secretary general of the Chinese Communist Party; and the PRC president to Mr Khamene'i. He also expressed the interest shown by PRC officials in the expansion and deepening of relations and cooperation between the two countries. The PRC vice premier submitted a report to President Khamene'i on the positive results of his talks with Iranian officials. He added: During the era of your country's reconstruction, we will make maximum efforts to cooperate with you. The PRC vice premier, at the end of his remarks, informed Mr Khamene'i that the PRC president had officially invited the Iranian president to visit the People's Republic of China.

Next, Mr Khamene'i, thanked the PRC vice premier for the kind and friendly messages of the leaders of PRC and welcomed the expansion of continuous mutual cooperation. He added: We have envisaged broad-based reconstruction in our country to mean a huge movement in all of our country's affairs. Therefore, we would prefer to have cooperation with those countries of which our nation does not have unpleasant memories.

At the close of these remarks, Mr Khamene'i accepted the PRC president's invitation to visit China and hoped that this trip would take place at an appropriate time.

Khamene'i Presents Friday Prayers Sermon
LD0303202189 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1514 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Second sermon of Friday prayers by President 'Ali Khamene'i in Tehran on 3 March—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate the merciful. [passage omitted]

Today is important for several reasons. I will refer to some of them and then talk about the main issue. [passage omitted]

One of the most important events in the past few days was the great message of our esteemed imam to the 'ulema of islam, seminary students, clergymen, sources of emulation, and religious teachers. When I was abroad, I heard parts of that message on the radio. It really instilled new life in the listener. When I returned home I listened to the message carefully. If one really wants to talk about that message and describe its contents, one should discuss every sentence of that bright, wise, spiritual, and well-thought out message, which is also rich and beautiful in a literary sense.

I think that this sermon and this opportunity is too brief to talk about that message. I only recommend to the addressees of the message—that is, the Islamic 'ulema community, clergymen, seminary students, and all our dear people who were directly addressed in parts of the message, which contains the necessary instructions for them—to read it like a lesson, a book, a divine tablet, over and over. I myself have read it several times, especially certain parts of the message, which when one reads them, one feels that every word should be contemplated and taken as a source of spiritual pleasure. The people and our dear clergy should really ponder them, because they are really the spiritual reflections of the creator through the heart of our imam.

However, the main issue I wish to discuss is that great commotion which has been raised in the world because of the stupid mistake of the standard-bearers of western policies, which, praise be to God, resulted in making the greatness of Islam and the Muslims, and the imam and the Islamic republic even more apparent. I would like to say a few words about that issue and say some new things beyond what I have already said.

What I understand and feel about the overall issue is that, after the imposed war ended and that great conspiracy that they had hatched against us was unsuccessful, thank God, and they were unable to weaken the Islamic republic, the arrogant conspirators of the world—the masterminds behind big policies—found a new stone with which to kill two birds. The great resistance of the Iranian nation became a cause of pride for this nation and the Islamic republic and a documented proof of the stability of this system and it improved the reputation of the Islamic republic in the world. After all this, the conspirators aimed at two birds with one stone: first, to weaken the attractiveness of the Islamic republic—because the Islamic republic is really attractive to the world nations. [pasage omitted] The second aim was to lower the value of Islam, the source of awareness of many nations in the world—at least for young people in Islamic countries. These are the two aims of world arrogance.

When we say world arrogance, we do not mean America or Britain alone, but western policies whose decisions are made jointly and with a common aim. They also have planners who are their experts in Iranian and Islamic affairs—the British government has them, the French government has them, America has them. These experts constantly sit down and think about what to do about Islam, which is growing every day, and what to do about the Islamic republic, which is so attractive to other nations. [passage omitted]

They do all that to see how they can confront the Islamic republic and Islam in the world. They have reached the conclusion that if they wish to reduce the attractiveness of the Islamic republic in the world and lower the value of Islam to young people in Islamic and non-Islamic countries, where Islam is very dear, they cannot do so through noisy political confrontation or military invasion. Because if they attack Islam and the Islamic republic politically and militarily, these would become more valuable to other nations. They fought against us for 8

years and used every means in the war, but the Iranian nation became known to the world as a resisting and oppressed nation. Islam became known as a symbol of resistance and self-sacrifice.

They realized that if they wished to combat the Islamic Republic and Islam all over the world, they could not do so through noisy political, military, and economic confrontation and open propaganda. They did so through another means, that is through some kind of cultural attack. They chose to denigrate Islam through pseudo-artistic and cultural activities. They chose to write, say and publish things in the world and represent Islam as a base, empty and disgraced ideology to the world Muslims. They saw that this was the way. They quickly found that wretched and miserable writer and asked him to perform the task. The evidence reveals this. He was asked to attack Islam in this manner.

The author of the book has not rejected Islamic issues; he has not put forth an ideological, philosophical, or historical criticism of Islam. That would not have served their purpose. [passage omitted] They wanted to write a book of fiction, full of magic and fantasy, and denigrate, insult, belittle, and mock an ideology which is attractive to the world today. They created this situation. This was the goal and the means they pursued. That is why the book was written.

Of course, that was a first step. After the book was written, all the major arrogant press in the major Western countries advertised the book. Some time before the imam's decree was issued I thought to myself: why are they advertising this book so much in these magazines? I drew my own conclusions on the matter. It was perfectly clear that the book was being publicized by the propaganda machine so that it would have more readers and be translated into various languages.

That was the first step. If that step had been successful—which it would have been if it had not been for the imam's decree—then it would have been made into a film. They would have made dozens of films based on the book. They would have filled all the movie theaters and television networks with films based on that base and corrupt book. In short, they wanted to create an atmosphere of mockery, insult, and denigration of the sanctities of Islam among the cultural circles in Islamic and non-Islamic countries. That was their plan; it was the aim of arrogance.

They would not have stopped at this book either. No doubt, if that book had been able to accomplish all that, that method would have continued. There are numerous writers in the world who are ready to sell their pens at high prices and write whatever arrogance they want against Islam. In a few years you would have seen the sacred name of the Prophet and his allies and wives, the Islamic sancitities and Islamic ideas being broadcast in the ugliest, most offensive, and distasteful manner in the world movie theaters, television, and books.

What would have been the outcome? The world's liberal people, young people, those who are not well-informed and the general public, would have thought that the Islamic republic, which has such high revolutionary claims and claims of bringing a new message, is based on such an ideology. [passage omitted]

The imam's edict frustrated all their designs. When the imam issued his edict on the writer being a blasphemer, everything in the world changed. Please pay attention. There is a great deal of difference between saying that we have boycotted the book. Well, some people in the world said that they boycotted the book, that they banned imports of that book to their country. Well, the banning of the book or boycotting it do not destroy it. When a book is banned and has to be smuggled then it finds more customers, more people will be willing to read and see that book and buy it at higher prices. Such a course of action will have no impact on the arrogance's policies and on the writer who wants to be famous, who wants to have income. There is a difference between those views which some people have expressed in the world and what the imam graciously stated.

The imam graciously stated that he is a blasphemer and he must be killed. [cries of support from crowd]

When the writer of a book—who has received money to smear mud and for writing trash—realized that he will thereby lose his life, realized that such an act would cost him dearly, then the issue becomes a different one from that of saying that we have banned the book.

It was the imam's action which hurt the very precise point of the conspiracy by arrogance. That is, all those who henceforth may intend to write such a book, or turn it into a film or display it in movie theaters or publish it—all of them will expect the danger of death from Muslims who have accepted the imam's edict and who want to act upon it. It is no longer easy for such people to do such an act.

The imam's edict was aimed precisely at the heart of the army of arrogance, defeating it. That was why they made so much noise in the world. As soon as the imam's decisive reaction, which was to neutralize the plot, appeared, the Western policies foolishly and hastily exposed themselves. They entered the arena and proved that, yes, the issue was a political issue—that it was not a purely cultural issue. Otherwise, they could refrain from reacting in that fashion.

The president of the French Republic and the British prime minister acted truly foolishly. They could have avoided speaking so explicitly. Well, you fools, why did you expose yourselves? Why did you prove to the world Muslims that you are supporting that issue?

They showed that they stand by this issue. It was revealed that all their designs were frustrated by the edict. And that happened when they had gone through a

great deal of trouble to make it possible for the French prime minister to come to Iran—that well, forget the past, we are ready to cooperate with you. The German prime minister was to come earlier. The president, the French foreign minister, the German foreign minister were to come as well, to say we have let bygones be bygones, we will cooperate with you and we are ready to participate in the reconstruction of the country. They planned to follow the normal course and have seemingly sound relations, which safeguard as far as possible the Western interests in our vast country, but at the same time to stab this poisonous dagger in the back of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

They arranged appearances well but all that they had in their bag was revealed. They were discredited. They were exposed. And that was done through the imam's decisive edict. That is why they are so furiously angry.

Now the issue in the world is this, that the West has pitted itself against the Muslims. Firstly, the Western policies and countries exposed themselves. They proved that they are opposed to the Islamic Republic with their very existence. They proved that they view Islam as a very serious actual danger and that they are prepared to rid themselves of Islam's viciousness by any means—of course, Islam for them is vicious—and not to allow Islam to spread more than it has already done in the world of Muslims and among Muslims. They intended not to let Islam find a foothold and or a chance for sovereignty. They began to arrange formations, they created sensationalism. In fact, it was revealed that what they claimed to be a cultural move was in fact a political move. Otherwise, is the life of a single human being so important for Mrs Thatcher and the French president that they sit down in the EEC and to threaten us with severing economic relations and resorting to economic embargo? Or to recall their ambassadors?

Are they really so humanitarian? Does anybody in the world believe that they are so interested in human beings and in human rights?

It is obvious that nobody believes this. Have the people of the world forgotten the record of England, France, and America on human rights? Do the world nations not know how many crimes they have committed and how many human beings they have killed?

Their deceptive move—pretending to defend the freedom of expression—can only deceive stupid individuals like themselves. Nobody else in the world believes such remarks.

They are the kind of people before whose eyes all sorts of crimes and violations of human rights have taken place, and yet they never made the slightest protest. And most of those acts were committed by them, by themselves.

Today in Palestine there is so great a catastrophe that the Israeli military are asking their government why it forces them to confront the youth in the streets. That has been written by the world press. [passage omitted]

Well they do this in full view of America, England, and France. And yet these countries show no reaction. They do not condemn it. [passage omitted]

All the world countries are crying out against the South African racists and that violent and despicable government. And yet, the only thing they wanted was to say that economic sanctions must be enforced against South Africa. But this same Mrs Thatcher did not accept it. She said that, no, they would not enforce economic sanctions against South Africa. This very government of England, these same gentlemen and ladies who are supporters of human rights. Are you supporters of human rights? Are the deprived poor people of South Africa not human beings? Are the victimized Muslims of Palestine who are victims in their own homes not human beings? They lack the right of expression, of writing, of demonstration, of government, of residence. These crimes are taking place in full view of America, England, France, and others, including Germany. They say nothing.

A passenger airline of the Islamic Republic with 300 or more passengers was shot down by the U.S. military. All its passengers were burned and drowned. This same Mrs Thatcher said that America was right. What kind of human rights is that? What kind of human rights do you support? You two-faced despicable liars. The greatest calamity for humanity today is the sovereignty of the lies of this lady and others in the world. This is the extent of their shamelessness and audacity. This is the extent of their mendacity. In the Halabcheh bombing, several thousand people died of chemical bombs which Iraq had bought from those countries.

Germany is accused of giving chemical bombs to Iraq; so is England and so are other countries. They have given chemical bombs to Iraq who used it against victimized Kurds in Halabcheh, killing several thousand of them in a very agonizing way.

They did not meet for that; the EEC did not meet. They did not decide to bring sanctions against a regime who engaged in such a great crime.

Were there no human rights there? Were there no human beings? Now you have become champions of human rights? Do the British really suffer from the death of one human being? They cut off the heads of thousands like Salman Rushdie in a single day without even uttering a word! This is not over his being killed. If it becomes necessary they are prepared to kill, choke, and dismember hundreds such as Salman Rushdie, providing their interests dictate it. The British, French or such like have no qualms about murder, these lying, deceitful governments.

The issue is something else. The issue is that they feel that there was a plot. They had spent money, they had an idea and wanted to use it against Islam and Muslims. They were disgraced and the weapon was taken away from them. They should understand that Muslims, whether Iranian Muslims or the Muslims of the entire world, will certainly not remain silent in the face of the deceit of such lying, evil statesmen. [crowd chants in support]

This issue is a black one in the history of Western policies, particularly for Europe. The United States has already disgraced itself in front of many nations and particularly in front of our nation. However, these European governments and policies have truly disgraced themselves. This includes France, Britain, and the FRG as well as some of their satellites. In addition, some other faces have also been identified in this issue. These evil hypocrites [reference to Mojahedin-e Khalq] who claim to be Muslims—these others don't claim to be Muslims—these hypocrites who claim to be Muslims and consider their Islam a true Islam, even though it is nothing but complete infidelity, even they have completely disgraced themselves in this event. It is true that you are against the Iranian nation, the leader of the revolution and our revolution, and are their enemies. You would not confirm the most basic truths that we could mention. However, this is an issue over Islam, over the prophet: O, you who have no nerve; O, you who have no honor and have no sense of honor for the prophet, why have you supported this author?

Even these wretches supported this author and opposed the Imam's decree. One really wonders at some people's wretchedness. [passage omitted]

There are also some governments that make some unnecesary connections in this respect, even though they have no interest in it. I don't particularly want to name all such governments, but the list includes governments such as that of India and others. We don't like it when oppresssed and suffering governments such as India, considering the lengthy struggle of the Indian people, take the side of oppressor governments such as that of the British on such popular issues.

There are some 150 million Muslims in India. How can Indian statesmen ignore 150 million of their citizens and nation and side with the British Government that is against Muslims and against anybody that is not one of them? Has the Indian nation forgotten what Britain did to them? [passage omitted]

I would like to make two points. The first point is that the West is not only confronting our nation today but all of Islam, the entire Islamic nation, and the greater Islamic ummah. This wave will become larger each day. Whether the British Government apologizes to the Islamic Republic today or not, there is no doubt that it will be forced to apologize to the greater Islamic ummah and doubtlessly will have to retreat. The second point is that our people's respect for such policies no longer exists. They wanted to portray themselves in a different light. People now have very little faith in such policies and in some cases have absolutely no faith in them.

I state this as the final view of the Iranian nation and our final view that Western policies and European nations should not believe that because our nation is currently undergoing an era of reconstruction and that because they may have something that our nation might need, then this nation will forego all that it holds sacred for the sake of such imaginary things. This is absolutely not so. Our nation, will bravely and decisively stand by its final principles and any hand that transgresses such principles will be cut off, no matter whose it is.

We are the same nation, the same people that withstood 8 years of war despite a world against us. We can withstand more, we can close our eyes toward our needs that the enemy can satisfy, as we have done so far. We will continue to rely on ourselves. Our nation must rely on itself. Naturally, this world is very large and there is a great deal of room for cooperation. There are many in the world who desire cooperation with the Iranian nation. Our nation is a large nation, our country is a rich one and our location in the world is a very sensitive one. The world cannot easily ignore this nation, this country, and the present conditions.

However, even if they could do without us we must still rely on ourselves. Our nation, our youth, workers, and farmers, anyone who has a role in the administration of the country, our scientists, researchers, and all the strata of society should realize that it is up to us to work, toil and concentrate our effort, to take steadfast steps on the road of the reconstruction of this country so that such people who are the leaders of these powers in the world and believe that countries such as ours need them do not become so bold as to consider it their right to insult Islam and what is sacred to this nation.

I decisively repeat that our nation must move with complete decisiveness and independently to reconstruct its own country and will continue to do so. Under no circumstances should the rich and powerful of the world believe that this nation will, for one moment, be prepared to belittle itself for them. [crowd chants followed by Koranic verses]

Imam Approves Supreme Judicial Council Members

LD0403190889 Tehran IRNA in English 1850 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 4, IRNA—Imam Khomeyni consented to the new responsibilities of the members of the Supreme Judicial Council.

The responsibilities have been specified in a meeting attended by the heads of the three branches of government (the executive, legislative and judiciary), Prime Minister Hoseyn Musavi, and the imam's son Seyyed Ahmad Khomeyni.

President 'Ali Khamene'i, Majlis Speaker Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, and Chief Justice 'Abdolkarim Musavi-Ardabili head of the Executive Legislature, and Judiciary respectively.

Earlier in a letter to the president, Imam Khomeyni had asked him to hold a meeting of the heads of the country's three branches and to specify the responsibilities of the members of the Supreme Judicial Council.

The meeting was held on February 13, and the president informed Imam Khomeyni of the results, which the imam accepted.

According to Article 158 of the Constitutional Law, the five-member council is composed of the chief justice, the prosecutor general Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohammad Musavi-Kho'ini, and three judges, Hojjat ol-Eslam Qasim Musavi Bojnourdi, Hojjat ol-Eslam Moqtada'i, and Hojjat ol-Eslam Marashi who has resigned.

Karrubi Speaks on Prophet Anniversary, Rushdie
LD0503113689 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] According to the Central News Unit reporter Mr Mahdi Karrubi, deputy speaker of the Majlis, presided over today's open session of the Islamic Consultative Assembly.

In a speech congratulating the people on the anniversary of the great prophet of Islam's mission he said that the Muslims are celebrating the anniversary of the prophetic mission under circumstances in which their hearts are bleeding over the martyrdom of a number of Muslims in India and Pakistan, as well as under the cultural onslaught and the secret plots against Islam.

He referred to the imam of the ummah's decisive decree on the punishment of the author of "The Satanic Verses," and said: Those who have produced Salman Rushdie from up their sleeves, are under the impression that they can prevent the implementation of God's decree through creating an adverse atmosphere, propaganda, and actions. But, with thanks to God, to the decisiveness of imam, and to the alertness of the Islamic Republic's officials, not only were their actions proved ineffective in their aims, but they aroused the fire of the wrath of the Muslim communities around the world, even in Europe.

In closing his speech, Mr Karrubi reiterated that the British Government and the West should categorically express their abhorrence vis-a-vis this crime.

On the basis of the same report, in today's open session of the Majlis, the credentials of Mr Seyyed Ebrahim Mir Ghaffari, the representative of Tavalesh, was approved.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Stresses Military Readiness
LD0503070389 Tehran IRNA in English 0645 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Esfahan, March 5, IRNA—Majlis Speaker Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani said Saturday [4 March] that the country should preserve its military preparedness through renovation and rehabilitation.

The Majlis speaker who is also acting commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces made the remark at the graduation ceremony of the eighth piloting course of the "Shahid Babaie" Air Base here.

"We are not after war but should always maintain our vigilance in which case we would have no war. But as soon as enemies felt we lacked (military) preparedness they would wage a war against us again," he said.

Speaking to IRNA at the end of his 4-day visit to Esfahan, the Majlis speaker said the researches conducted in industry and military industries were inspiring.

Anti-Aircraft Guns Test-Fired in Tehran 4 Mar
LD0403121989 Tehran IRNA in English 1210 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 4, IRNA—Anti-aircraft guns were test fired in Tehran for 15 minutes Saturday, the military confirmed.

Anti-aircraft fire was intermittently heard over the capital between 3:00-3:15 pm local time (11:30-11:45 GMT).

An official at the joint Armed Forces headquarters said the guns were fired at imaginary targets.

Pakistan

Anti-Rushdie Demonstrators Attack Karachi Airport
BK0403090289 Hong Kong AFP in English 0849 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Karachi, Pakistan, March 4 (AFP) - Thousands of demonstrators ransacked a section of the airport here to protest against Salman Rushdie's novel "The Satanic Verses" and against a U.S. military visit here, police said Saturday.

The protesters scuffled with airport security officers late Friday and smashed doors and forced their way into the VIP lounge, they added. The protesters were at the airport to welcome Pakistani Muslim Shi'ite leader Allama Sajid Ali Naqvi, returning from a visit to Iran.

Iranian spiritual leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini has called on Muslims to kill Mr. Rushdie, saying he has blasphemed Islam with his book.

Some two dozen men were detained for disorderly conduct and damaging public property, police said. There were no reports of injuries. The protesters, belonging to the Tehrike Nifaze Fiqhe Jaffaria, a pro-Khomeini Shi'ite party, chanted slogans against Mr. Rushdie, Israel and the United States.

Seven people died during an anti-Rushdie demonstration in Islamabad last month.

A unit of the U.S. Seventh Fleet arrived in this southern port city late Tuesday.

Soviet Allegation on Afghan Issue Denied

BK0503112289 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Pakistan has denied a Soviet allegation that Pakistanis are involved inside Afghanistan. A Foreign Office spokesman in Islamabad today, commenting on a reported Soviet statement alleging Pakistanis are infiltrating inside Afghanistan, described it as totally unfounded and baseless.

Regarding the recognition of the interim government of Afghanistan, he said the matter is still under examination. He said Pakistan wants to see the representation of Iranian-based Afghan mujahidin in the interim government and any effort in this regard will be welcome. He said Pakistan is maintaining contacts through diplomatic channels to bring about participation of the Iranian-based Afghan mujahidin in the interim government.

In reply to a question, the spokesman said Waqan has been vacated by the Soviet troops.

Islamabad Reports BBC Interview With Bhutto

BK0603051989 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Prime Minister Ms Benazir Bhutto has expressed confidence that the people's representative government will succeed in stabilizing the country's economy. Answering questions from all over the world on the BBC's "It Is Your World" program last night, the prime minister said we need a more efficient administration to manage the economy. A political government is more responsive to the people's needs because it is accountable to the people, she added.

In reply to a question on Pakistan's agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the prime minister said economic mismanagement earlier reached such an extent that the IMF had to ascertain how we would repay in the event it provided more loans to us. The prime minister announced a three-point strategy to streamline the economy and do away with inflation. She said we are trying to boost private investments, sell some government assets to finance the country's economic program, and expand the tax base.

Answering a question, Ms Benazir Bhutto said Pakistan has a written constitution which clearly specifies the duties and responsibilities of the federal and provincial governments. The higher courts may be referred to for clarification on any constitutional point if any side holds a different view on it.

The prime minister said this [difference between her federal government and the provincial government of Punjab] is not an issue between the provincial government and the federation, but an issue between the Islamic Democratic Alliance [IDA] and the Pakistan People's Party [PPP] in Punjab. It will be better for the stability and prosperity of Pakistan to create an understanding and reconciliation between the IDA and PPP in Punjab so provincial matters are handled more peacefully.

On the country's narcotics problem, Ms Benazir Bhutto said that it is not an easy task to deal with those engaged in drug trafficking, but the democratic government will never allow the expansion of the drug menace for the sake of a secure future for the young generation of Pakistan and will not allow the illegal trafficking by those involved in it.

The prime minister said that spraying operations were carried out recently to destroy the poppy fields and that no untoward incidents took place at the time. This indicates that desired goals can be achieved when something is done with wholehearted determination.

When asked whether it was difficult for a Muslim woman to rule over Muslim men, Ms Benazir Bhutto said that irrespective of being men or women, we are all human beings and the individual identity of each of us is very important.

On "The Satanic Verses", Ms Benazir Bhutto said she believes in freedom of expression, but understands there are exceptions when the government has to intervene. She cited the example of the British Government in dealing with "The Spycatcher." The prime minister said that some people gave added publicity to Rushdie's blasphemy and when such a thing is repeated it leads to further blasphemy.

On Afghanistan, the prime minister said her government has categorically told the Afghans that we will not support any particular individual or any specific party, but we will accept any decision made jointly by the Afghans. We do not like to exploit the Afghan situation for unfair advantages. We will work in a manner to secure the goodwill of the Afghan people. Ms Benazir Bhutto said that although the Soviet Union has withdrawn its troops from Afghanistan, it is unfortunate that stability has not been established there thus far. More than 3 million Afghan refugees are in Pakistan and we would like to see them returning home with a sense of security.

Hundreds of thousands of people throughout the four continents listened to the broadcast. The program's producer said the BBC received 1,400 calls from all over the world, whereas 100 to 200 calls are generally received for such programs.

PRC General Chi Haotian Meets Bhutto 4 Mar

BK0403150089 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1400 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] General Chi Haotian, chief of General Staff of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, called on the prime minister in Islamabad today and discussed with her matters of mutual interest. Admiral Iftikhar Ahmad Sirohey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and China's ambassador to Pakistan were also present on the occasion.

Sri Lanka

Reportage on 'Massive' Offensive Against Tamils

'Heavy Fighting' Reported

BK0503053789 Hong Kong AFP in English 0518 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Colombo, March 5 (AFP)—Sri Lanka's dominant Tamil separatist group Sunday charged that Indian and Sri Lankan troops backed by helicopter gunships have launched a fresh offensive against them in the island's northern jungles.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) said its guerrillas were putting up fierce resistance in the Nethikaikulam jungle region where heavy fighting has raged since Saturday.

"Indian and Sri Lankan helicopters have been bombing the area indiscriminately, setting the villages aflame and causing heavy civilian casualties," the LTTE said in a statement released from its London office.

There was no immediate reaction from Sri Lankan or Indian authorities here, but Foreign Minister Ranjan Wijerane said Thursday that joint operations would begin for the first time to protect Sinhalese villages.

Mr. Wijeratne's announcement came four days after suspected LTTE activists butchered 37 Sinhalese peasants in a village bordering Tamil-majority Batticaloa District.

"There will be closer coordination between the two armies. They (Indian forces) will be attacking from one side and we will be attacking from the other," the minister told reporters Thursday after a meeting with Indian military commanders.

The LTTE claimed that more than 100 civilians had died and several villages were destroyed in what it called the "massive combined military offensive against the LTTE" since late Friday.

The group said more Indian troops had been sent to the area and soldiers were backed by heavy artillery, tanks and helicopter gunships.

Saturday's LTTE statement said the group had killed 81 Indian and six Sri Lankan security personnel in February.

India has 45,000 to 50,000 troops deployed in the two regions under a July 1987 Indo-Sri Lanka peace accord which sought to end the bloody tamil separatist campaign which has claimed more than 10,000 lives since 1983.

The LTTE repudiated the peace pact and refused to surrender its arms, prompting a major Indian offensive in October 1987 to disarm the group.

Since then, nearly 800 Indian soldiers and more than 2,000 suspected LTTE activists have died in bitter fighting.

Sri Lankan military casualties have been almost negligible because local troops were confined to barracks after the peace pact and patrolling was done by Indian troops and Sri Lankan police.

Further on Offensive

BK0503095089 Hong Kong AFP in English 0933 GMT 5 Mar 89

[By Amal Jayasinghe]

[Excerpt] Colombo, March 5 (AFP)—Heavily armed Indian troops have launched a fresh offensive against Tamil guerrillas in northern Sri Lanka as rebels killed five sailors and an Indian soldier elsewhere on the island, military officials here said Sunday.

Indian officials here confirmed that a fresh offensive against the dominant Tamil separatist group was underway in northern Nethikaikulam jungles, but denied that aircraft or Sri Lankan security forces were involved.

"There is an operation, but there is no joint offensive with Sri Lankan troops nor are we using aerial attacks," an Indian High Commission official here said. He did not give further details or say if there had been any casualties.

The most powerful guerrilla group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), said its guerrillas were putting up fierce resistance in Nethikaikulam, a vast jungle area, where heavy fighting was raging since Saturday.

"Indian and Sri Lankan helicopters have been bombing the area indiscriminately setting villages aflame and causing heavy civilian casualties," the LTTE said in a statement released from its London office.

Sri Lankan military officials dismissed the LTTE claim as "mere propaganda to get sympathy" after the bad press the group received after suspected LTTE activists butchered 37 Sinhalese peasants last week.

Both Sri Lankan and Indian military officials have denied combined operations, but Foreign Minister Ranjan Wijeratne said Thursday that joint offensives would begin for the first time to protect Sinhalese villages.

Mr Wijeratne's announcement came four days after the suspected LTTE massacre of the Sinhalese peasants in a village bordering Tamil-majority Batticaloa District.

"There will be closer coordination between the two armies. They (Indian) will be attacking from one side and we will be attacking from the other," the minister said after a meeting with Indian military commanders here.

The LTTE claimed that over 100 civilians had died and several villages were destroyed in what it called the "massive combined military offensive against the LTTE" since late Friday.

The group said more Indian troops had poured into the area and soldiers were backed by heavy artillery, tanks and helicopter gunships.

The latest LTTE statement came a day after the group vowed to continue its bloody guerrilla campaign to set up a separate Tamil state called Eelam in the island's Northern and Eastern provinces where most of the minority Tamils live.

Saturday's LTTE statement said the group had killed 81 Indian and six Sri Lankan security personnel and lost 23 fighters in February.

In another development, suspected LTTE activists ambushed a Sri Lankan Navy vehicle in northeastern Trincomalee District late Saturday killing five sailors and wounding one, security sources here said.

They said the victims came under heavy automatic weapon fire after rebels exploded a mine under the vehicle and the attackers escaped with a few weapons from the sailors who were bringing rations to their base.

It was the worst strike against Sri Lankan security forces in the area in recent months, the sources said adding that a search operation was underway to track down the killers.

In another incident in northern Jaffna Peninsula, LTTE activists shot dead an Indian soldier, the sources said. [passage omitted]

AFP Notes Casualties

BK0503095089 Hong Kong AFP in English 1107 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Colombo, March 5 (AFP)— Eight Indian soldiers and at least 40 Tamil guerrillas have died in a fresh Indian military offensive against Tamil separatists in northern Sri Lanka, Indian officials here said Sunday.

Thousands of Indian soldiers destroyed several hideouts of the dominant rebel group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), in renewed fighting in northern Nethikaikulam jungles in the past three days, officials said.

"Our estimate is that between 40 to 50 LTTE men were killed during the operations. Eight Indian soldiers died and 13 were wounded," an Indian High Commission official said. The official said the worst fighting was around Nayurru lagoon in Mullaitivu District which is mostly a jungle area. They denied LTTE charges that helicopter gunships and Sri Lankan troops were involved in the offensive.

50 LTTE Men Killed

BK0503131489 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 1253 GMT 5 Mar 89

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, Mar 5 (LANKAPUVATH)—At least 50 LTTE terrorists have been killed in a major operation launched by the Indian Peacekeeping Force (IPKF) in Sri Lanka's eastern sector. A spokesman for the Indian High Commission told LANKAPUVATH today that when Indian troops advanced on three terrorist camps, 20 km south of Mullaitivu, the terrorists had put up stiff resistance.

In the ensuing battle at least 50 terrorists have been killed and many others wounded, the spokesman said. Eight IPKF soldiers were killed and 13 others wounded in the operation.

Meanwhile an LTTE terrorist leader, code named Regan, when challenged by Indian troops yesterday, in Batticaloa, committed suicide.

Rebels Reportedly Blow Up Navy Vessel; 5 Killed

BK0503072889 Hong Kong AFP in English 0711 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Colombo, March 5 (AFP)—Tamil guerrillas blew up a Navy vehicle in northeastern Sri Lanka killing five sailors and wounding one, security sources here said Sunday.

Guerrillas believed to be from the dominant Tamil separatist group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), ambushed the vehicle by exploding a mine as it passed through Palampattu village Saturday, the sources said.

They said the victims came under heavy automatic weapons fire after the explosion and the attackers escaped with a few weapons from the sailors who were bringing rations to their base in Trincomalee District.

"The five men died instantly. They had no chance to fight back," a military official here said.

It was the worst strike against Sri Lankan security forces in the area in recent months, the sources said adding that a search operation was under way to track down the attackers.

In another incident in northern Jaffna Peninsula, LTTE activists shot dead an Indian soldier, the sources said.

India has some 45,000 to 50,000 troops in the island's Tamil-majority north and east in line with a July 1987 Indo-Sri Lanka peace accord which sought to end a bloody tamil separatist campaign.

The LTTE repudiated the peace pact and refused to surrender its arms prompting a major Indian offensive in October 1987 to disarm the group.

Since then, nearly 800 Indian soldiers and more than 2,000 suspected LTTE activists have died in bitter fighting.

Wijetunga Sworn in as New Prime Minister 6 Mar

BK0603113 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Finance Minister D.B. Wijetunga was sworn in as the new prime minister before President Premadasa at President's House this morning.

Industries Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe will receive a letter of appointment as the leader of the house from the president. [passage omitted]

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